Pipes AND TOBACCOS

Spring 1999

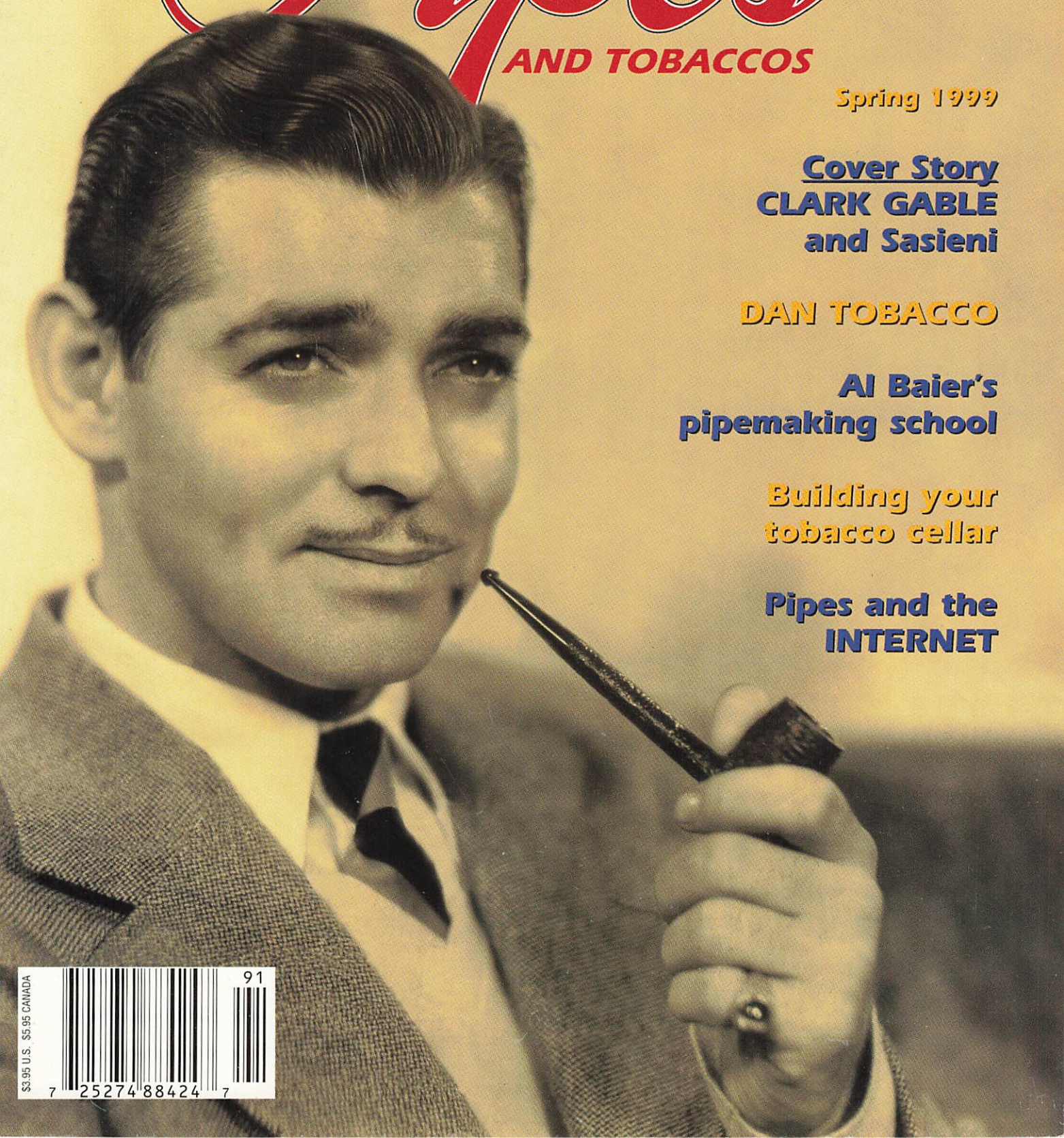
Cover Story
CLARK GABLE and Sasieni

DAN TOBACCO

Al Baier's pipemaking school

Building your tobacco cellar

Pipes and the INTERNET



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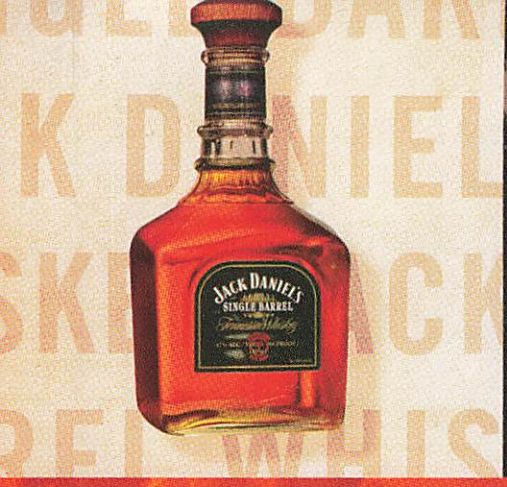

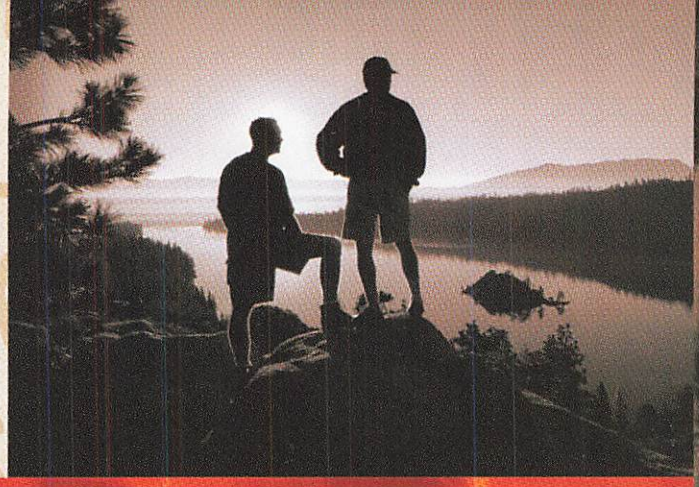

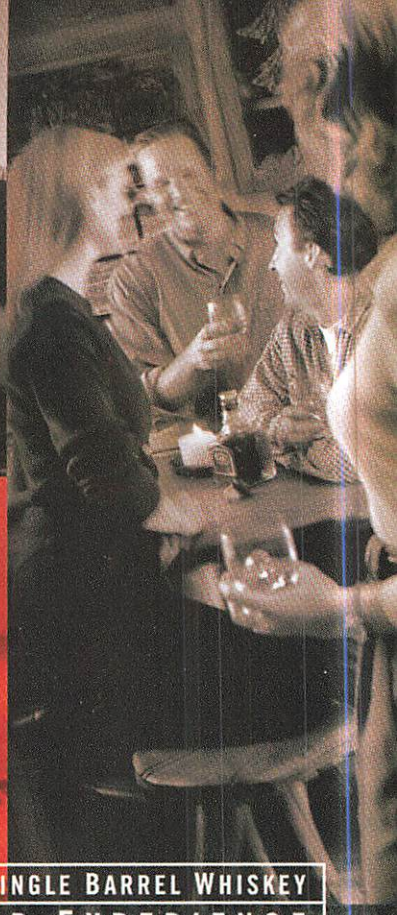

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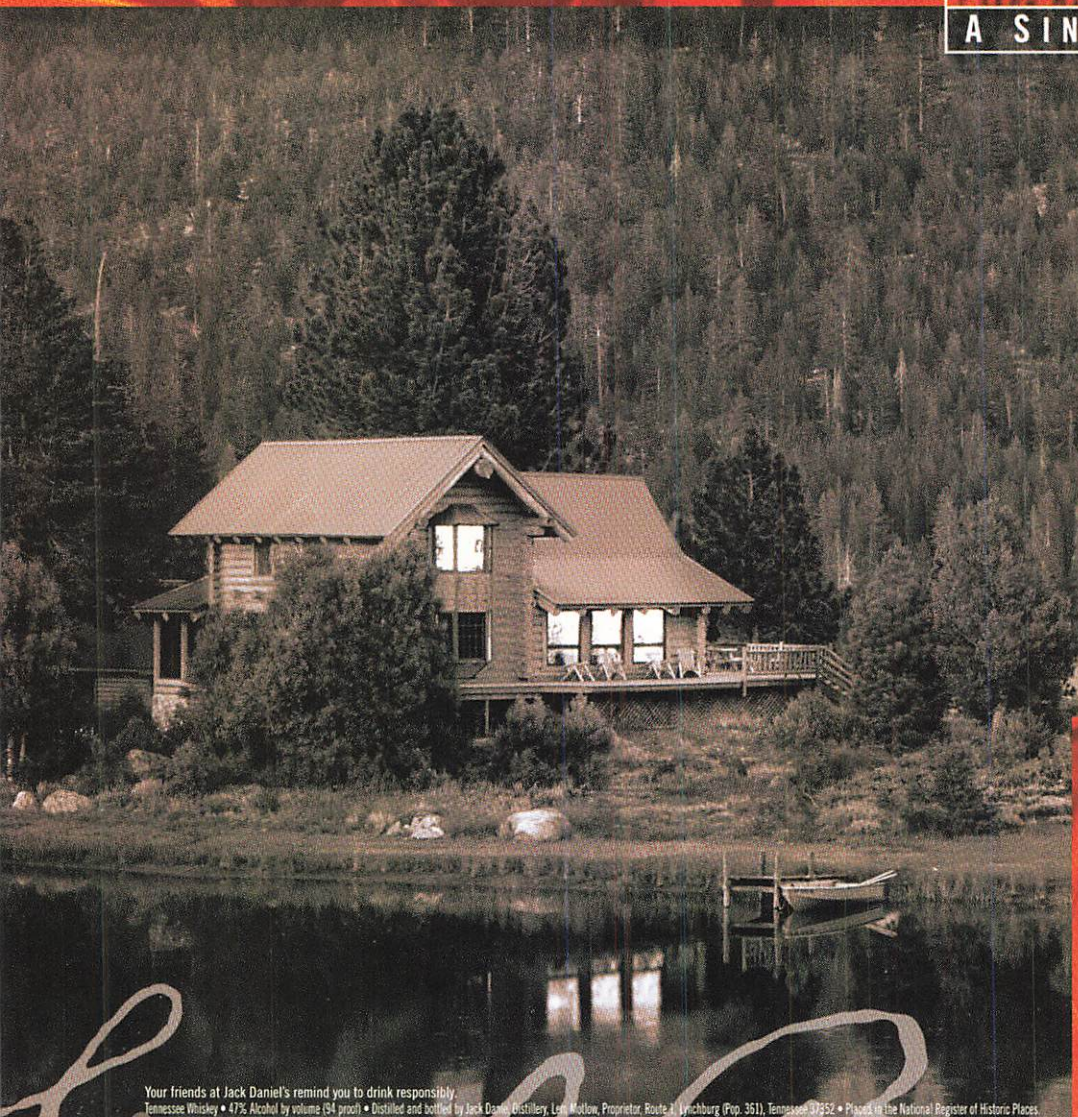

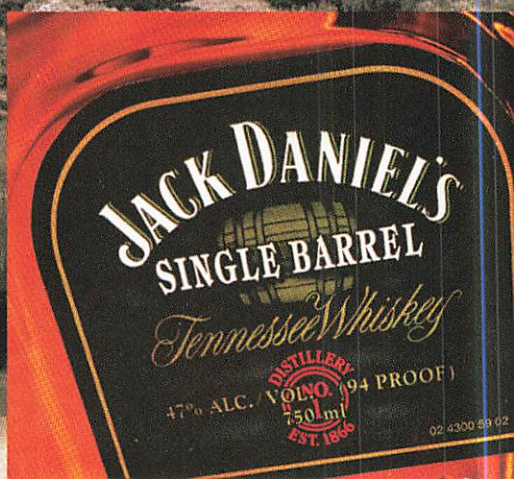

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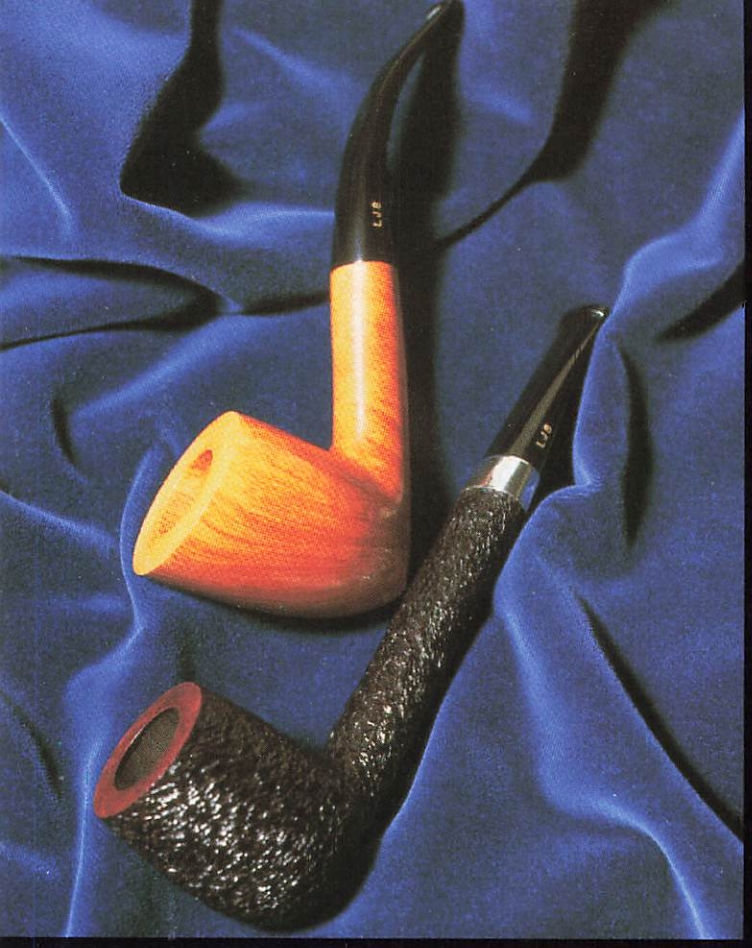

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Tobacco Barns
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Fairfax
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Georgetown Tobacco
Washington

Pipes AND TOBACCOS

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12 **Connecting the Dots**
Sasieni is a name well-known to pipe smokers and collectors. Here is the story behind the pipe, including the history of the famous dots, the shapes that the pipe has taken through a number of generations and some general guidelines for dating Sasieni pipes and reading their nomenclature.

24 **Starting a Tobacco Cellar**
There is no more secure feeling than to have a good store of tobacco set aside, lest taxes, politics or global catastrophe interrupt your supply. It also helps to know that your tobacco will become more flavorful as it ages. Learn some techniques for safely storing your valuable tobacco under optimal conditions for effective aging.

32 **Pipe Sculptor**
Wood carver, award-winning pipemaker and pipe carving tutor Al Baier is in no hurry when it comes to carving his famous figural pipes. Two hundred hours is perfectly acceptable to him in the quest for beautiful smoking sculptures. But he and his wife, Ginny, may be better known as the proprietors of Pimo, a company supplying tools and materials for the amateur pipecarver, and for their school dedicated to helping the beginning pipemaker learn the basics of pipemaking.

38 **German Ingenuity**
Dan Tobacco of Germany develops its tobaccos from raw leaf to the final aged blend, with all the steps in between. Its sister company, Dan Pipe, demonstrates the same dedication to pipes. Together they provide a solid commitment to making the finest pipe-related products available to the pipe smoking public.

52 **Online Pipe Smoking**
The Internet is perhaps the most plentiful source of information on pipes available. With Internet access you can talk with other pipe smokers, ask question of experts, see pipes around the world, learn about pipe clubs, pipe manufacturing, pipe distribution, pipe smoking techniques, pipemaking strategies, pipe tobacco A to Z....Well, just about anything you can imagine is available on the Internet. And it is not difficult to take advantage of.

56 **Pipe Carving Contest**
Another carving contest to challenge your design and carving capabilities. There is less latitude allowed in shape this year, but enough to let you flex your creativity. If you have not yet tried carving a pipe, here's your chance to see that it is both more simple and more complex than you may have thought.

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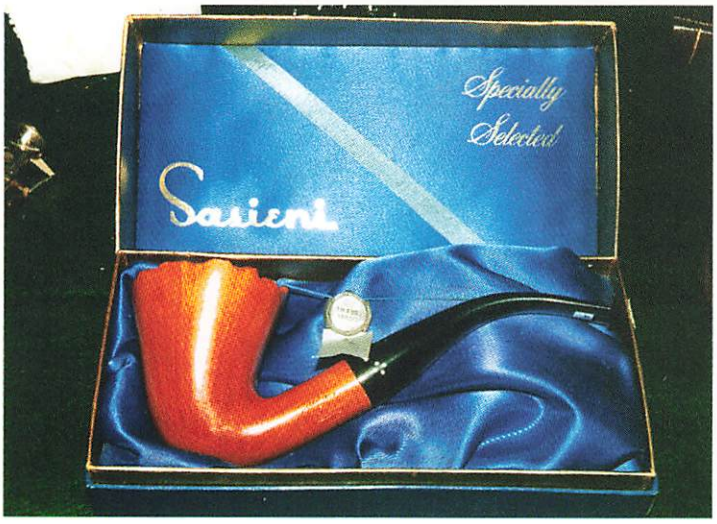

Page 12

58 **A Multitude of Pipes**
You would never guess, when you first walk into The Smoker of Albany, just how many thousands of pipes are housed in such an apparently small shop. But it isn't small—organization and a working knowledge of quality tobacco and collectible pipes makes this shop huge.

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Cover

Our cover is a vintage promotional photo for Sasieni Pipes. Clark Gable and Sasieni pipes are two irresistibly classic icons, perfect for the cover of a magazine celebrating the class and elegance of the pipe. You can see the original advertisement on page 12. *(Photo used by permission of James B. Russell, exclusive importers of Sasieni of London Pipes).*

Pipes AND TOBACCOS

A quarterly magazine celebrating pipes of all kinds and fine tobaccos.

DAYTON H. MATLICK, editor-in-chief
CHUCK STANION, managing editor
PHIL BOWLING, associate editor
DORIS FRIEDRICH, copy editor
JANE FRAMPTON, editorial assistant

DAYTON H. MATLICK, president/publisher
JAMES P. SWINDELL, vice president
STEVE ALLMOND, director of finance
VICTORIA GARDNER, production director
DAVE POND, production associate
KAREN ROGERS, production associate
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MELISSA PRICE, asst. circulation manager
KATHLEEN KALWA, circulation assistant

ED O'CONNOR, Director of Sales & Marketing
MICHAEL RUBISH, account executive
SHARON GORMAN, sales coordinator

HEADQUARTERS:
Pipes and tobaccos
3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27604-1029 U.S.A.
Telephone: 919.872.5040
Fax: 919.876.6531
Email: *chuck@pt-magazine.com*
Subscription email: *subscribe@pt-magazine.com*
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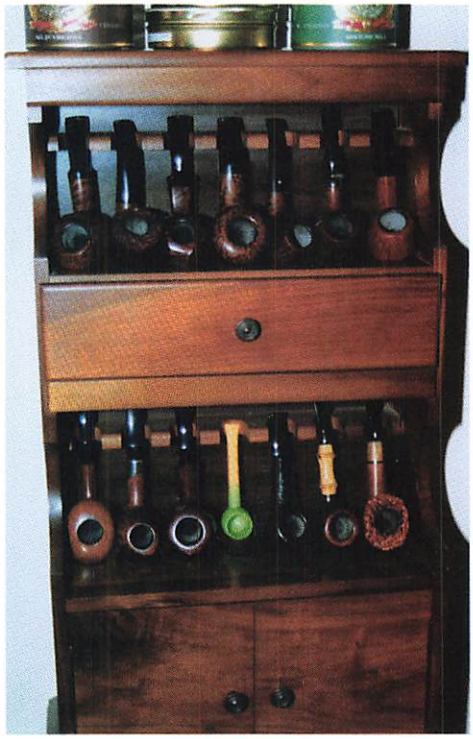
P&T 1999 Pipe of the Year

I had intended to use this space to talk about the significance of a green and yellow bubble pipe that sits in my home pipe cabinet alongside some of my favorite smoking pipes. Here is a photo:



The bubble pipe belongs to my daughter, and often when I select a pipe she joins me with her own. We have fun.

Many of us have wonderful memories of our fathers and grandfathers smoking their pipes when we were children, and I had hoped to show that even in this time of anti-smoking hysteria our pipes provide fundamental bonds between ourselves and our families. Smells hibernate in the human mind until something triggers them and transports us vividly to the time and place of their origin. I had hoped to remind us all that the aroma of pipe tobacco links us to our own past and to our childrens' future, where an occasional whiff of tobacco evokes memories of contentment and safety and affection, where the scent of tobacco evolves naturally into a legacy of treasured reminiscence.

It was going to be one heck of an editorial.

However, my wife was not enthusiastic about my using our daughter to make such a point, so forget it, I'm not even going to mention it. But it's just as well, because there are other things we need to discuss.

Specifically, there is a project we here at *P&T* are quite excited about: The 1999 *P&T* Pipe of the Year.

This is no bubble pipe; this is a limited edition of 250 collector pipes, each numbered and dated and stamped with the *Pipes and tobaccos* logo, as well as the logo of its maker. And that's the best part: we were able to achieve the near-impossible by commissioning J.T. Cooke to carve these pipes.

They are straight billiards. They feature Cooke's amazing three-step sandblasting texture, though a few smooths will be available. These pipes are fabulous. I am definitely buying one. (I have learned through hard experience this week that no amount of whining, begging or personal humiliation will earn me a free one, so I *have* to buy one.) The blasts will cost $280; the smooths more, according to grain. We'll provide photos of some of these pipes in our next issue, along with a specific description of what makes the *P&T* Pipe of the Year not only beautiful, but among the finest smoking pipes you could ever own. We won't begin accepting orders for these pipes until April 15, so be patient.

Of equal import is the introduction of a new columnist, William Serad, whose tobacco review column, "Trial by Fire," begins in this issue. Serad is a talented writer with a unique grasp of tobacco, and is responsible for developing several of the most popular blends made by Cornell & Diehl tobacco company. You are going to like his descriptions and assessments.

There are plenty of other good things in this issue, but I'll let you find them yourself. Just fill your pipe with soap—no, better make that *tobacco*—light up and start turning the pages. When you're finished, grab a pen and write us a letter. We'd like to know what you think.

Chuck

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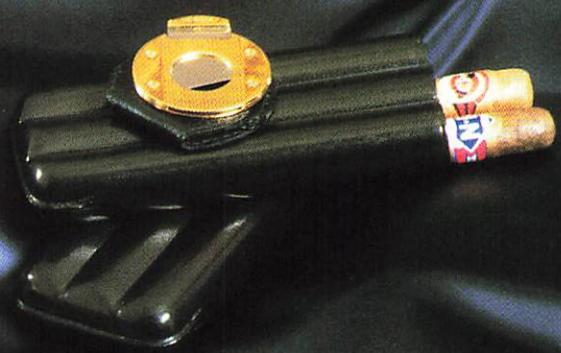

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P&T Readers Respond

Salt Revisited

Last spring I wrote of my tribulation involving the use of salt to sweeten some of my pipes. I had followed the direction, provided by an experienced pipemaker and published in a popular pipe magazine, to fill the bowls with salt, top off with grain alcohol (I used Grave's 190 proof), and let sit for five days, clean out, dry and smoke. After smoking two of the pipes, shank cracks developed: one through a fissure and one in perfectly sound wood. I was left with eight more treated pipes which I dared not smoke.

I followed the advice of two master pipemakers to try to save the uncracked pipes, which was to insert alcohol-dipped pipe cleaners in the shank for five hours and then to rinse by running water through the pipes. I was further advised to try to renew the flexibility of the wood fiber by treating for one hour with a pipe cleaner which had been soaked in a 25 percent glycerin solution (excess solution removed).

After drying for a few days, I filled and lit the first pipe thus treated. I smoked with great caution: a few puffs...let it go out..a few more puffs...no crack. I finished the bowl. No crack. I checked the pipe a couple of hours later. No crack Whew!

The other seven pipes were similarly treated and tested. No cracks. I am now back to smoking them normally and regularly without problems. I'm enjoying an extraordinary sense of relief that my pipes have returned from the edge of the precipice and that, after abusing them as I did, I've been given another chance. So the tale has a happy ending.

I've also had the heartening experience of hearing from many pipesters who, having read about my horrible experience with salt, wrote and called to express their condolences and offer suggestions for remediation. You're a marvelous bunch of guys and it feels great to be part of the brotherhood.

Rob Denholtz
Poughkeepsie, New York

P&T: *When disaster presents itself, resolute action is often required. The first smokes from these reconditioned pipes must have been suspenseful indeed. We applaud your perseverance, congratulate you on the return of your pipes and thank you for sharing the experience.*

On anti-smoking pipe smokers

I agree with Mr. Benswanger *[Winter 1999, page 6]*. Being a cigarette smoker for 10 years and a pipe smoker for the past two, I have never tried to impose smoking on others. I feel that this issue must be a personal decision. The only way I can truly enjoy smoking my pipe is where I don't bother other people, usually outside. But I also agree with *P&T*—like me, they do not like to be told what to do and how to do it. This should be a personal choice—to smoke or not to smoke—not a decision made by others.

Lehocki Zoltan
Ontario, Canada

I could not help noticing the loud and ubiquitous whimpering and moaning of several writers about how maligned we smokers are in '90s society. Well, as a smoker myself, I submit to the "choir" that we have, as a group, brought much of this upon ourselves! How, you ask? By our lack of consideration for our nonsmoking brethren! Let's face it, folks, they outnumber us by a very large margin.

Even though I smoke, I do not inhale by choice. When I am in a smoke-filled room, that choice is taken away from me, and I am forced to inhale! Not sweet fresh smoke of my own, but the stale fetid smoke of someone else's exhalation! Now, I am a smoker; how do you think a person who does not smoke, and may even be asthmatic, is going to respond? They are going to ask to be protected by law from that inconsideration.

I do not smoke in my house or in my automobile, since I cannot abide the odor of stale smoke. Even at my own house I go outside to smoke. Most of my friends do not even know I smoke. I never smoke around nonsmokers. If I choose to sit in a smoke-friendly lounge or in a tobacco shop, that is my choice. But even I rebel at having it thrust upon me.

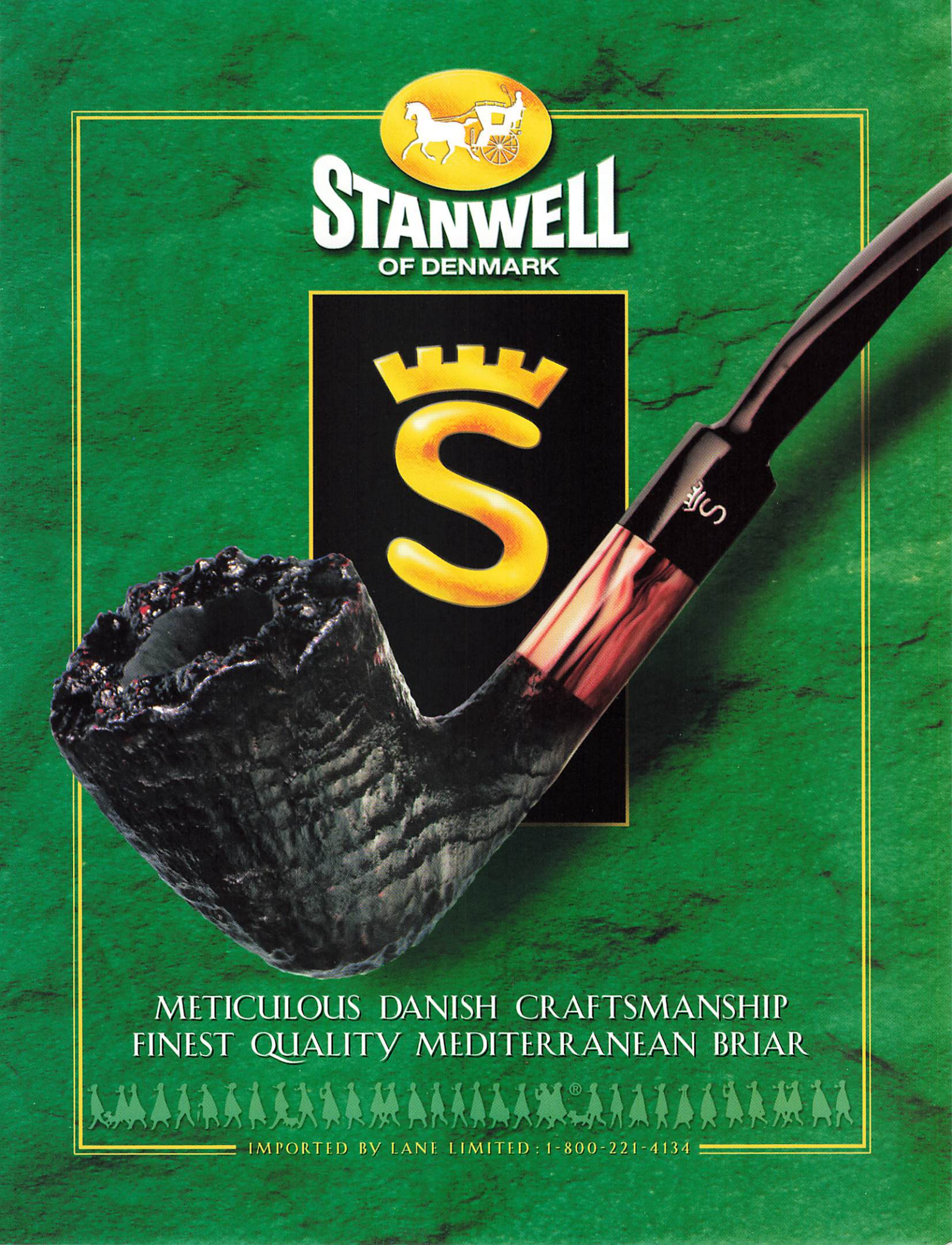
Come on guys! Quit your bitching and use a little common courtesy in dealing with nonsmokers. You don't fornicate in public because it offends people; why smoke around nonbelievers?

Clete Davis
Elmhurst, Illinois

It astounds us that so many people take a knee-jerk interpretation of the phrase "smokers rights" as meaning: "The right to blow smoke into the faces of nonsmokers." The majority of pipe smokers have no interest in offending others with their gentle pastime. The reason it is imperative that we begin defending our right to smoke is because very basic constitutional rights are being taken from us, and that should frighten nonsmoker and smoker alike.

We are not talking about smoking in neonatal intensive care units here. We are talking about the illegal elimination of our rights to smoke in our own homes, in our own cars, in our own yards, on our own porches. This is not speculation—in some areas of this country it has already happened. And it is spreading. We won't even have the option of civil disobedience if tobacco is taxed into oblivion. The anti-smoking propagandists are to be congratulated when even smokers are lulled into complacence, lumping all of the issues of freedom and law into an impotent acceptance under the mental heading of "common courtesy." Yes, we should be courteous and smoke responsibly. But, no, that does not mean we should submissively allow our freedoms to be negated.

I am writing in response to the letter you published by Wm. D. Benswanger. I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applaud you for publishing this inane letter and I sincerely hope that you will return his check and cancel his subscription. I will be happy to permit you to double-bill me for mine so that you will not lose any revenue. The entire anti-smoking movement in this country is based upon false and misleading information fed to the public by our government. This is evident when true facts, such as published by the World Health Organization *[a study showing that secondhand smoke has no ill effects]*, get almost no exposure. The smoking world would be a great deal better off without the likes of the self-righteous Mr. Benswanger. I advise him to relocate to California where he may practice his fascism with the rest of the government officials in that state.

Mark S. Stewart
Las Vegas, Nevada

There was nothing irrational (or ungrammatical) about Chuck Stanion's summer editorial. And any smoker who doesn't share his views of the current regulatory scene is a fool. You had two in the Winter issue, Messrs. Benswanger and Holden. Mr. Benswanger's was the more offensive. His pietistic pose is laughable. He allegedly still enjoys a pipe at home but wants to ignore the slippery slope his chair is sitting on. American history is a chronicle of incrementalism. I am reminded of the passage of the income tax in 1923. It was meant to apply only to the rich. Some senators were concerned that the rate "might eventually go as high as 10 percent!"

No one has the right to set smoking policy for a privately owned establishment except the owner. Publicly financed entities must accommodate, unless someone can prove smokers pay no taxes. That you can be fired for smoking at home should send a chill even to boot-lickers. Are they so myopic that they actually believe that everything is OK because they are not the ones being fired this time?

Rick Miller
Victor, New York

"Shucks, I don't find the bugs at all bothersome."

You folks have some real winners reading your magazine. If I were you I would go ahead and send Benswanger's check back. The guy is obviously a self-centered, self-righteous, intolerant boor. Notice the number of times he uses the term "I" or "we." Seems to me this is the kind of person everyone wants as a neighbor. He certainly has a lot of gall referencing Mr. Stanion's soapbox. Obviously his is large enough for two. I know that you will be diplomatic, and tolerant, (something that Benswanger missed in his social graces class) but should you decide to return his check, let me know and I'll make up the loss.

David Nester
Pocono Pines, Pennsylvania

Irish Faces

Thank you so much for another superb issue of *Pipes and Tobaccos* magazine. Especially the photos of Irish kinsmen. Memories are made of this.

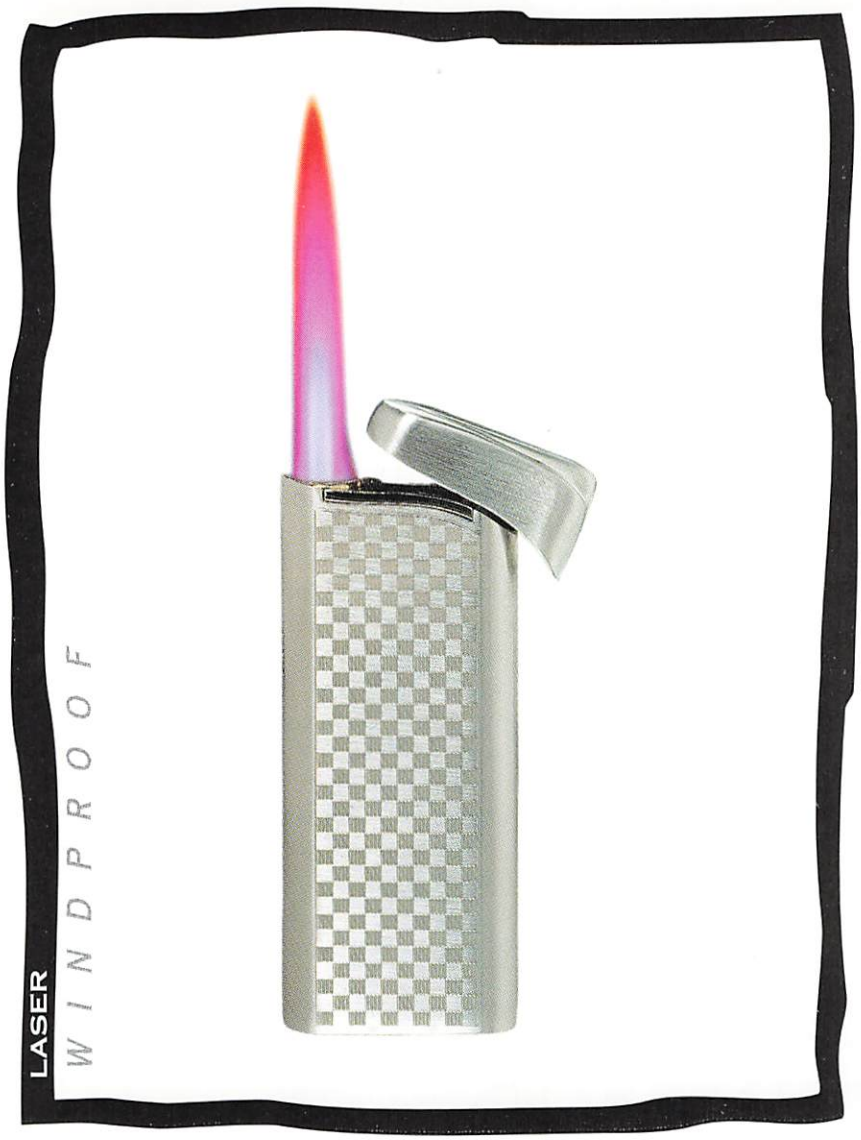
Clarence McFee Willis
Bunnell, Florida

I recently bought the Winter 1999 issue, especially for the photo article on Irish pipesmoking.

Wonderful article, except for one thing—I want to see MORE of Mr. Crowe's work!

Earl Needham
Clovis, New Mexico

I really enjoy the magazine and look forward to its arrival; I hope the day comes when you will publish monthly. The latest edition is splendid as usual, especially the photographs of the Irish gentlemen with their pipes. Where on earth, besides Ireland, can one find a pipe with a beautiful windscreen such as those in the pictorial? I have one pipe, a Cyclone, with a screen but would like to find one or two more; my walks to work on blustery win-



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ter days here in northern Michigan would be much more pleasant if I didn't have to dodge flying ashes and sparks.

The magazine is great, please keep up the good work.

Bill Mayer
Petoskey, MI

Many pipe companies—probably the majority—manufacture at least a few pipes specially fitted with hinged windscreens, though these tend to be somewhat expensive, especially when fitted with silver or gold. Removable windscreens are available, however. These chrome covers clip into the bowl of virtually any pipe, and thus can be used from pipe to pipe. They are handy not only for protecting your pipe from windy conditions, but for keeping sparks from flying out and burning clothes and furniture. And they are reasonably priced—usually around $2 each. If your local tobacco shop doesn't have them in stock, it can order them for you through FGT Enterprises.

In defense of non-malicious vocabulary

I have to respond to Joseph Gerwood's letter in the Winter issue of *P&T [objecting to the term "non-psycho" used in the previous issue's editorial]*. The passages to which he refers with such ire constitute a total of 82 words, of which two are offensive to him. His letter contains about 350 words. Do I detect . . . dare I utter the word . . . paranoia? This was another of those cases where I had to go back and read the "offending" article carefully because I couldn't remember, after three months, anything to provoke such a reaction. I still didn't find anything. This was a simple, benevolent, light, tongue-in-cheek essay meant to be entertaining. Let me see now, from what other quarters might *P&T* expect an angry letter within the next few weeks? The Cincinnati Airport Authority? The Protective League of Ladies in Their Sixties? The Society of Traveling 17-Year-Olds? Watch out, Jay Leno. The next time you do a monologue in which you use the words "crazy" or "psychologist," you may have Dr. Gerwood banging on your dressing room door the next day.

Rick Holden
Huntsville, Alabama

Great tobacco, great life

My brother-in-law recently gave me a subscription to *P&T*. I really do not deserve such a gracious gesture. With the subscription I received sample pouches of tobacco. I probably don't deserve this generosity either! Anyway, can you please tell me the specific tobacco sent? The pouches indicate "Imported by Hollco Rohr, Chatsworth, CA—Quality Pipe Tobacco—made in Denmark" and have a sticker, "PS-38" affixed.

By the way, I am a 55-year-old relative novice to pipe smoking, having given up a three pack a day, 34-year cigarette habit two years ago. I have been smoking one to two cigars a day since deep-sixing the cigarettes. I still enjoy a daily cigar, but have opted for a pipe in the evenings. What pure enjoyment. I have acquired three Peterson's, one Comoy, one Jobey and one "Irish Second." Again, I most likely don't deserve such enjoyment, but I'll take it anyway. What a brother-in-law! What a magazine! Life is great!

Tom Young
Cyberspace

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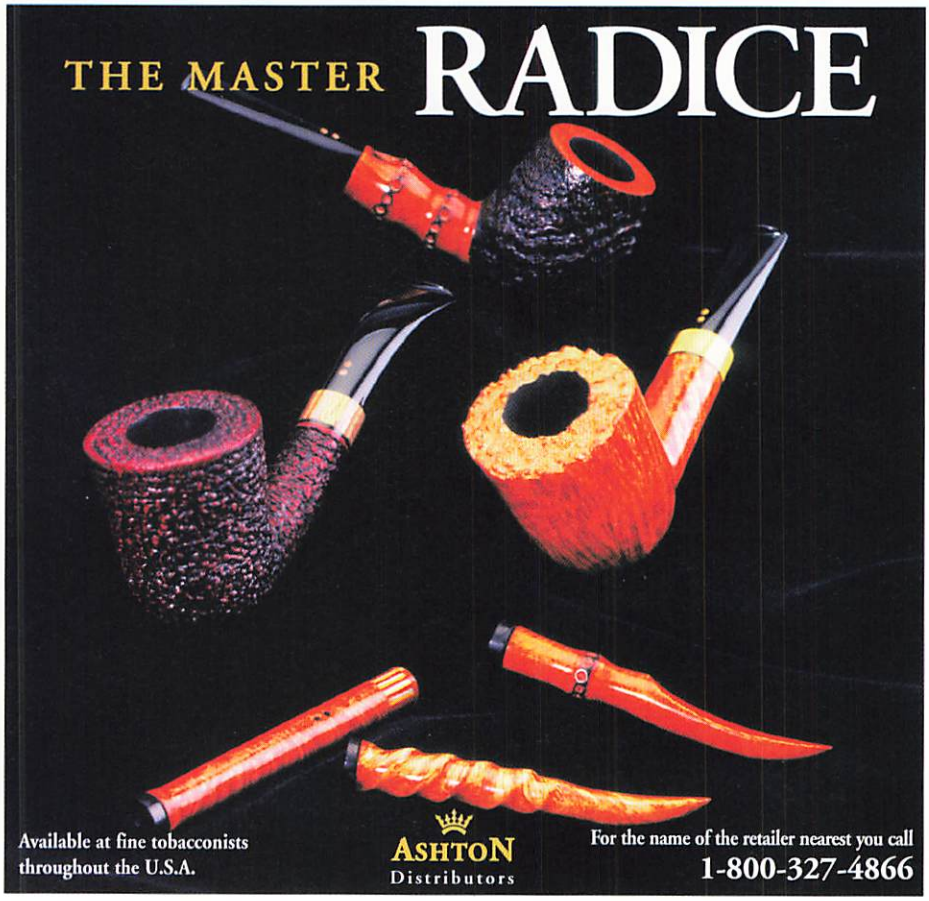

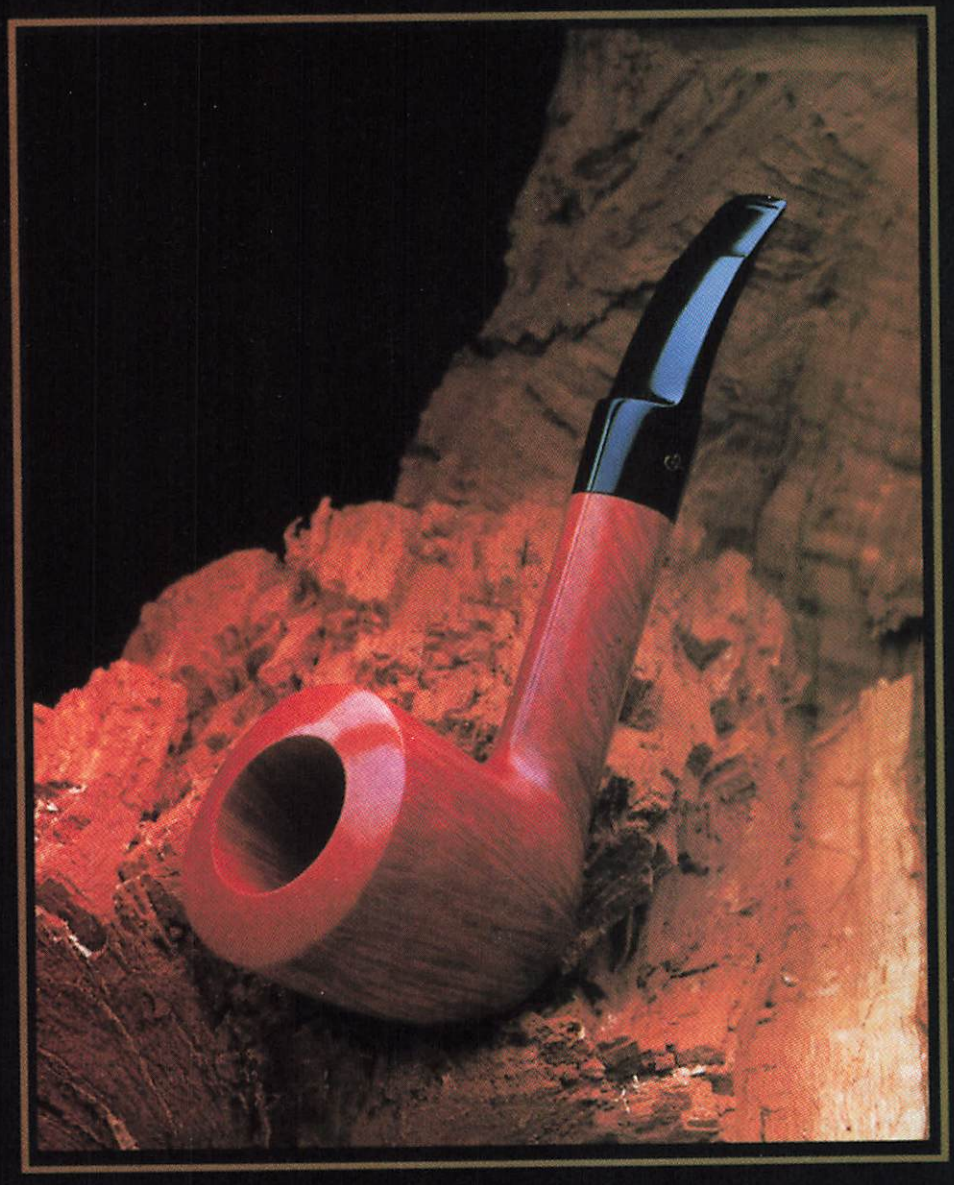

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Connecting the Dots

A Concise History of the Sasieni Pipe

by Stephen P. Smith

Among the great names in collectible English briar, Sasieni may well represent the greatest value. The pipes made by the Sasieni company between the years 1919 and 1979 rank among the very best the London pipe industry had to offer. They featured superb wood, flawless bowls, outstanding smoking qualities, and a unique styling.

Yet for all that, Sasienis are among the most underrated pipes on the collectible market, usually selling for far below their real worth. In this, they offer the astute collector a genuine opportunity, whether he or she is looking for a pipe with potential for appreciation, or simply a great pipe at a reasonable price.

It is vitally important to realize the Sasieni company changed hands on two occasions, and each owner had different priorities and agendas. Not surprisingly, this was reflected in the quality of the pipes made during these different times. All bore the Sasieni name, and yet they were very different pipes.

It is possible to divide the Sasieni history into three eras, similar to that of Barling pipes. In fact, throughout this article, I will be referring to "Pre-Transition, Transition and Post-Transition" Sasienis. While this may raise a few eyebrows, I believe it will become clear these classifications are actually quite appropriate.

It will also become clear that a collector must be able to distinguish between Sasienis of different eras, as it is mainly the family-made pieces made between 1919 and 1979 that are truly desirable to collectors. The dual purposes of this article, then, are to trace the history of Sasieni pipes, and to enable collectors to judge, with a reasonable degree of certainty, when the Sasieni in question was made.

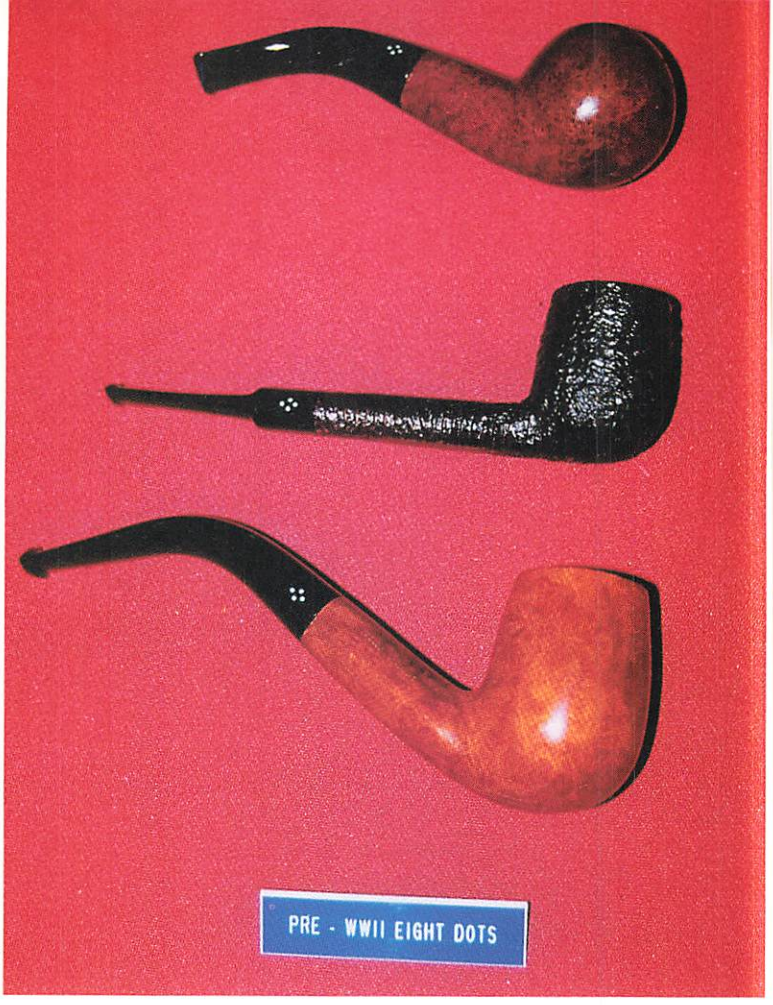
A Brief History of the Sasieni Company

There is a great deal of mystery surrounding Sasieni pipes, owing largely to the paucity of written information about them, as is the case with many collectible pipes. Even the name of the founder is subject to debate. One respected source says the founder was named "Joel" Sasieni. Another equally respected source says with equal certainty the name was "Joseph" Sasieni. (A third, rather less reliable source once told me "Joel" and "Joseph" were brothers, but I think we can safely dismiss that.) An old Sasieni catalog that I came across maddeningly identifies the founder as "J. Sasieni."

Whatever his first name was, Mr. Sasieni apprenticed at Charatan and then moved on to Dunhill, where he eventually rose to the position of factory manager. Many men would have been perfectly satisfied with such a position, but not Mr. Sasieni. He opened up his own factory in 1919, believing he could improve on some of Dunhill's methods. Mr. Sasieni was, if nothing else, an optimist.

Things did not go smoothly for the new firm. The factory burned down almost immediately. Undaunted, Mr. Sasieni simply rebuilt the factory and carried on.

One change he incorporated in his pipes was the method of curing the bowls. Eschewing the oil curing method favored by Dunhill, Sasieni briar was air cured, similar to Barling. Sasieni then took this process a step further by "oven curing" his pipes. Each pipe was cured in an oven over a period of six weeks, being removed periodically by a factory worker, who would wipe away the moisture with a rag as it



emerged from the bowl, and check it for cracks. The end result was that Sasieni pipes (the ones that survived) were extremely dry-smoking.

Sasieni was not oblivious to the success Dunhill had achieved with its famous "White Spot" logo, and while he obviously couldn't copy the logo exactly, he apparently saw no problem with reinterpreting it. Therefore, every Sasieni "First" that came out of the factory had a single blue dot in the stem. The dot was made by drilling a hole in the stem and inserting a piece of blue plastic rod, which was then buffed flush with the stem.

Not surprisingly, the idea of a former employee competing with it and using a very similar trademark didn't exactly make Dunhill's day. It threatened legal action in both the U.K. and the U.S. Sasieni was saved in England by that country's rather vague trademark laws, and the Sasieni One Dot continued to be produced for the European market for several decades.

However, Sasieni was not so fortunate in the U.S., where by the early 1920s Sasieni had found an enthusiastic audience. In an initial attempt to comply with U.S. patent law, Sasieni moved the one blue dot to one side of the pipe, with another dot on the other side. This logo was still considered too close to Dunhill's, and only a few side dot Sasienis were ever made, which are now extremely rare and collectible.

So, thanks in part to Dunhill's patent attorneys, one of the most famous logos in the pipe industry was born. To clearly differentiate his pipes from Dunhill's, and also to distinguish the American market pipes from all others (American market pipes originally had only a three-month guarantee, although by the mid 1930s this was extended to one year) Sasieni put four blue dots on the stem of his pipes, arranged in the shape of an elongated diamond.

The distinctive logo was an immediate hit in the U.S., where it, along with the pipes' exceptional smoking qualities, helped the pipe to sell in such quantities that the factory had trouble keeping up with demand. In fact, by the 1930s more than 90 percent of Sasieni's production was going to America.

Ah, but we Americans are a restless lot. We just don't know when to leave well enough alone. So enamored had the U.S. market become of the four blue dots, the importer wanted to make sure they could be seen by everyone standing on each side of the smoker. Therefore Sasieni, reluctantly by some accounts, agreed to put four more dots on the right side of the stem.

The Sasieni Eight Dot is now the most collectible of all Sasieni pipes, due to both its scarcity and the fact that, unlike other Sasienis, the collector can be reasonably certain when the pipe was made. The Eight Dot made its debut in the early 1930s, and was discontinued during WWII due to the inevitable shortages of supplies. Like the Four Dot, the Eight Dot had its logo made by individually inserting rods of blue plastic into pre-drilled holes in the stem, similar to the process used by Dunhill for its one white spot.

This was an excruciatingly difficult procedure, even on the Four Dot, for each dot had to be placed just right in order to create the desired diamond shape, and on the Eight Dot, both sets had to be symmetrical. For all that, it is rare to find an original Sasieni bit in which the dots are even the slightest bit off. This in itself bears testimony to the fastidiousness with which Mr. Sasieni applied his craft. It also makes it fairly easy to spot a fake Sasieni stem.

Both the Eight Dot and the Four Dot were marketed in the U.S. during the pre-

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war years, with the Eight Dot fetching more money, even though both pipes used the same wood.

The postwar years brought many changes at the Sasieni company, not the least of which was the death of Mr. Sasieni himself, in 1946. His son Alfred (named, perhaps, for his father's arch-rival and former boss?) proved a worthy successor to his father's business, and the company continued to thrive under his leadership. About this time the company started stamping "Four Dot" on the shanks of the pipes, to further capitalize on the now-famous trademark's prestige. There were other changes in both the shank nomenclature and the dots themselves, which will be reviewed in detail later on.

Through the postwar years, Sasieni added shapes and lines. While the Four Dot remained its most famous product, the company also sold lines of "seconds" under various names, such as Mayfair, Fantail, Olde English and Friar. These were pipes made of good wood, but possessed of some flaw, usually filled with putty. Pipes that were almost, but not quite, good enough to be a Four Dot were sold as Two Dots. A Two Dot might have a very small fill, or have a flawless bowl with non-descript grain. In any event, it is clear Sasieni was determined to put the Four Dot logo on only the most perfect pipes.

Alfred Sasieni continued to run the company prosperously until 1979, when he sold out to another firm. Interestingly, he stayed on in the capacity of a director. At first it seems to have been a harmonious partnership. The new owners started their tenure with a limited edition reissue Eight Dot. This was a generous-sized, natural-stained smooth pipe, which occasionally also had a gold band. Each pipe had a blue string running through the bowl, shank and stem, affixed with a lead stamp and paper tab signed by Alfred Sasieni himself. These pipes are both strikingly handsome and maddeningly elusive, since only 100 (accounts differ) were made.

This spirit of cooperation between the old and new owners does not appear to have lasted long. Alfred Sasieni believed only vulcanite should be used for pipe stems, eschewing the newer, trendier Lucite. When the new owners, contrary to Alfred's wishes, issued a new Ten Dot, replete with Lucite stem, it seems Alfred decided he had had enough, and left the firm for good. Interestingly, I had heard of the Ten Dot prior to writing this article, but had long thought it to be nothing more than a myth. However, while researching this article, the existence of the Ten Dot was verified by both Richard Hacker and Massachusetts-based collector Red Coombes, who even sent me an old Levin Mailer with a picture of the pipe.

The new owners of what can accurately be called the "Transition" firm continued to create high-quality pipes using the old wood and methods they inherited from the Alfred days. However, these pipes are not as collectible as the family pipes, and it is necessary for the collector to be able to differentiate between the two.

The new owners sold the company in 1986. Unfortunately, the newer, "Post-Transition" firm decided to abandon the high-grade marketplace and transformed the Sasieni into a midrange "smoker," a metamorphosis from which it has yet to recover. The new owners decided to capitalize on the Four Dot mystique by eliminating all "second" lines and issuing practically everything under the Sasieni banner as a Four Dot. This had the inevitable effect of lowering the overall quality of the line. For the first time, it was possible to find a Four Dot with a putty fill, which would have been unheard of when the

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family ran the company. Even the "Transition" firm had maintained the integrity of the Four Dot line by marketing flawed pipes under some other line.

Ironically, it is generally agreed the two most active markets in this country today are the "high end" and "low end" markets, with the middle $35-$100 range being the most sluggish—precisely where the new Sasienis are now being marketed. Fortunately, fairly obvious changes in the nomenclature—to say nothing of the presence of putty—make it easy to spot a "Post-Transition" Sasieni.

Dating a Sasieni

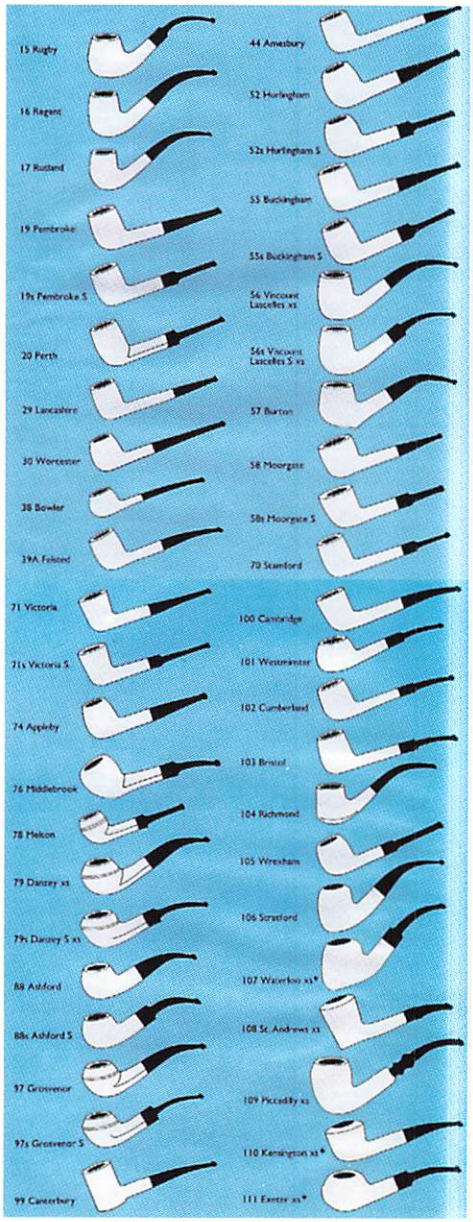
No, this has nothing to do with taking a pipe out to the movies with you. As I have mentioned before, it is important to be able to date a Sasieni that you are contemplating purchasing. Pre-Transition Sasienis, as I will now call them, are obviously the most collectible and desirable, with the Transition pipes being marginally collectible (although the commemorative Eight Dot, when you can find one, is extremely collectible), and the Post-Transition Sasienis having little or no collector value at all.

Unlike Dunhills, Sasienis (and in fact most pipes) do not have an explicit system for dating the pipe to the year. However, by understanding an admittedly somewhat arcane combination of nomenclature, patent numbers and dot arrangements, it is possible to narrow your Sasieni's date of manufacture to within a certain era, and sometime even down to a certain decade.

The pre-WWII pipes are easier to date than the postwar pipes because of the number of changes in the details that help to date the pipe. Son Alfred seems to have made some initial changes in the nomenclature after taking over the company in 1946 and was content to leave well enough alone. Sasieni nomenclature changed very little between 1950 and 1979, although the company continued to develop new shapes and finishes.

To begin with, there are three main elements to dating the Sasieni pipe: the patent number, the style of the name "Sasieni" as it appears on the shank, and the Dots themselves. Naturally, there are exceptions to these rules (this hobby would be boring without them), but for the most part these guidelines apply more than 95 percent of the time. All Sasieni One, Four and Eight Dot pipes made before WWII and destined for the U. S. market carried a patent number on the shank that usually started with the numbers "15," with 150221/20 and 1513428 being representative of the group. Also, the name "Sasieni" was stamped on the shank in a very florid manner, with the tail of the last "i" sweeping underneath the name forming a shape like a fish, for lack of a better description. This script was discontinued by Alfred almost immediately after he took over the company, and is a reliable indicator of a prewar pipe. Underneath in block lettering are the words "London Made," with the patent number making the third line.

The dots will help you narrow this down further. As we mentioned, the short-lived U.S. market One Dot was introduced around 1920 and was replaced by the mid-1920s by the Four Dot. The 1920s Four Dot is distinguishable by the florid Sasieni script, a patent number and four blue dots, which are quite small compared to the pipes of postwar years. Furthermore, by



the early- to mid-1930s Sasieni began stamping pipes, based on the shape, with other names, which were usually, but not always, English towns. For example, apples were stamped "Hurlingham," bulldogs were "Grosvenor" of "Danzy" and panels were "Lincoln." One rare and interesting variation of this was the large bent, dubbed "Viscount Lascelles." Even in this soft Sasieni market, these pipes regularly sell for $150 in their rare appearances on the estate market.

As mentioned above, the Eight Dot appeared in the early 1930s. These too have the florid script and the patent number. Although the Eight Dot remained in the catalog through the war, it was for all intents and purposes discontinued during WWII.

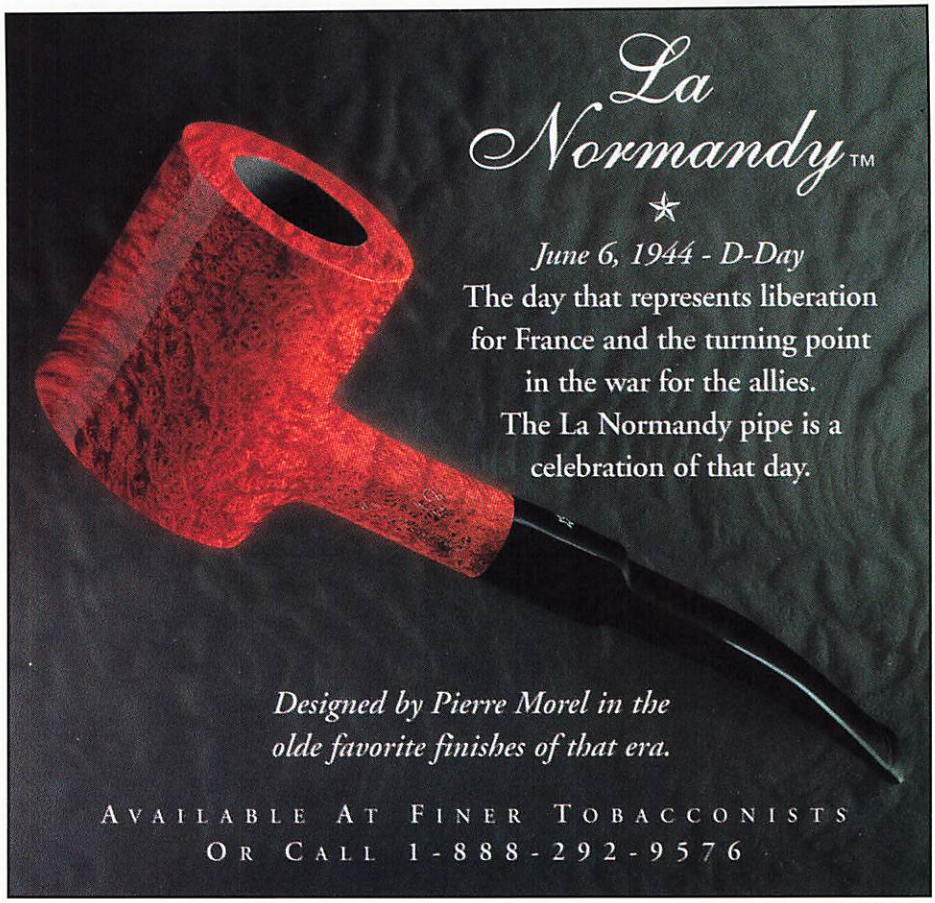
Once Alfred took over the company in 1946, these elements changed in fairly rapid succession. The first thing to be changed was the nomenclature itself. In place of the elaborate "Sasieni" stamp of prewar pipes, a simpler, though still script-style, "Sasieni" was used. This can be seen on patent pipes that have the small, old-style dots.

Soon after, Sasieni enlarged the dots, and they formed an equilateral rather than an elongated diamond. My pet theory on this is that the dots were enlarged to make up for the fact there were no longer eight of them, but I can't prove it. Finally the patent number was discontinued, and the words "Four Dot" were added. The shank thus read:

Sasieni
Four Dot
London Made

Somewhat later still, this was modified to reflect the finish, e.g., Four Dot Walnut or Four Dot Natural. All these changes seem to have been made in the years between 1946 and 1950. Therefore, a pipe with new-style dots and old-style stamping almost certainly has a replacement stem.

This system changed little if at all in the ensuing 30 years. When the company was sold in 1979, one of the first things the new owners did was eliminate the town names from the shanks. The dots were enlarged yet further, and the Sasieni name, though still done in script, was larger, as was the rest of the shank nomenclature, which in all other ways was similar to the Pre-Transition nomenclature. While these pipes are not as collectible as the family-made pipes, they were made with care and are high-quality.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The nomenclature changed again in 1986, with the sale of the company to the Post-Transition firm. The three-line nomenclature was changed to two lines, with the first reading "Sasieni 4 Dot" and the second identifying the finish, e.g., Natural, Walnut or Ruff Root. Note how 4 Dot is spelled, using an Arabic numeral 4, as opposed to spelling out the word four. This is the easiest way to spot a Post-Transition Sasieni, as the new company has used both script and block lettering to spell the word Sasieni on the shank.

As mentioned above, there are exceptions to these guidelines, which can be frustrating. Probably the most feared aberration in our neatly constructed Sasieni universe is the European One Dot. As may be remembered, Sasieni had no problem keeping his original trademark in Europe in spite of Dunhill's best efforts to the contrary. This led to the pipe being manufactured for European markets until the '60s. If in doubt, check the rest of the nomenclature. Old-style stamping (just think of the fish) means an old pipe.

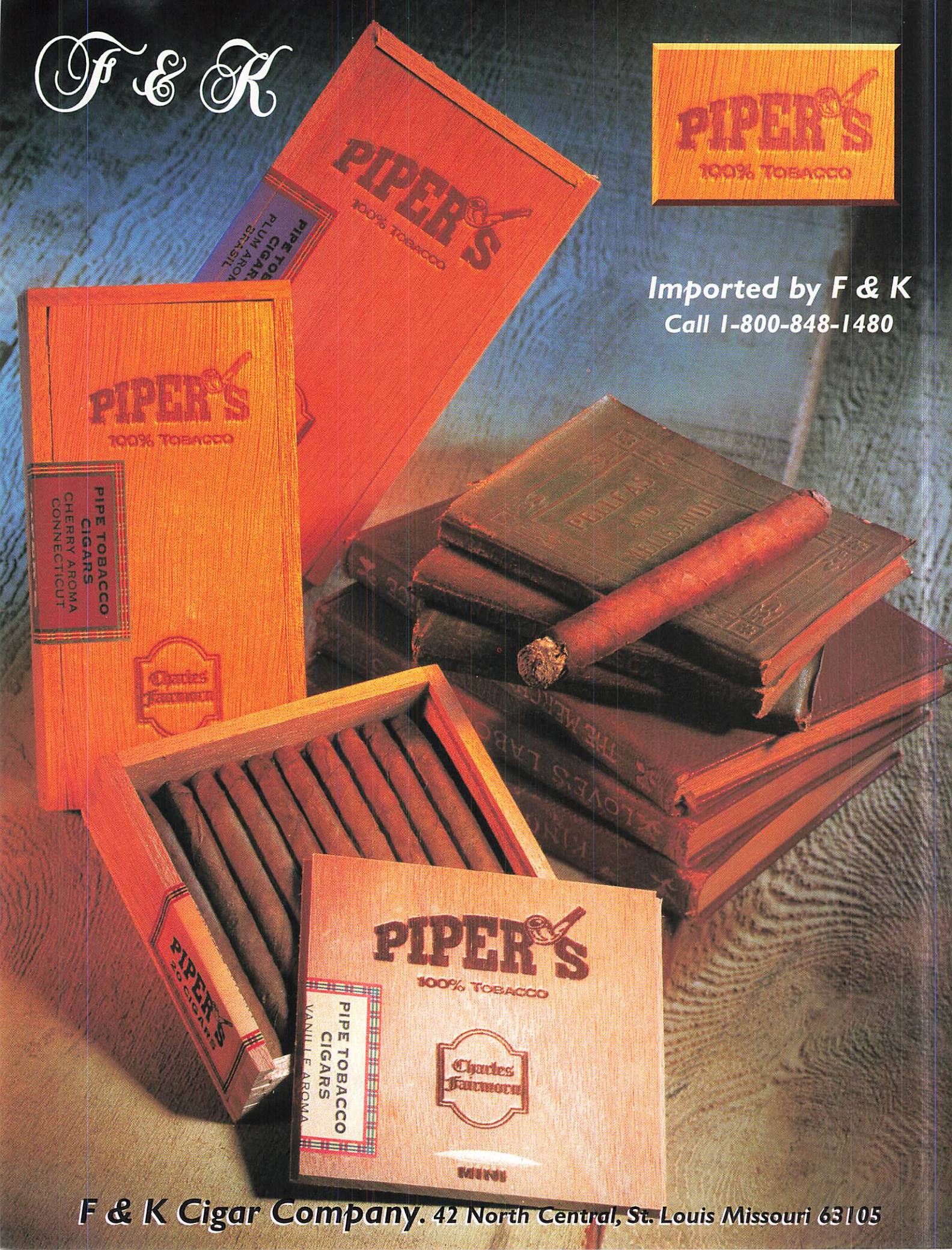
The most difficult to distinguish from 1920s era U.S. One Dots are the European One Dots made in the '30s and '40s. Here you just have to know your patent numbers and hope for the best, bearing in mind virtually any prewar Sasieni is collectible. In any event, these pipes are rarely found in the U.S.

A few other pipes, such as the plum-finished pipes, kept their patent number after the war. Again, knowing your dots and script styles will help keep you from misdating these pipes.

Why Collect Sasienis?

There are many reasons to collect these pipes, ranging from the purely monetary to the aesthetic and esoteric. While I personally do not collect pipes to make money, nor do I advise it, the fact remains that a high-grade, flawless, first-quality pipe, currently selling for less than $100, and often less than $50, surely must have some potential for appreciation. No less an authority than the late Barry Levin himself once told me he felt Sasienis were severely under-valued, but as time went by they would eventually take their rightful place next to Dunhill and Barling as people begin to appreciate the wonderful qualities of this pipe.

There are many theories regarding the soft market for these pipes, the most logical and most accepted of which points to the low price of the currently made pipes. Sellers are often reluctant to price a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pre-smoked pipe higher than an unsmoked one of the same brand, and buyers reluctant to pay more. It is important to remember, though, there is a vast difference in quality between the Pre-Transition and Post-Transition Sasienis. The older pipes should sell for more than the new ones, simply because their quality is so much higher.

Monetary considerations aside, there are many other reasons to collect Sasienis. First, unlike many collectible pipes, the Sasieni is actually quite datable, contrary to popular belief. The ability to date a Sasieni at least within a certain era, and sometimes within a decade, not only deepens our appreciation of these pipes, it also ensures we spend our money wisely.

Furthermore, there is the company itself. Sasieni was a family-owned company, run by people who took deep pride in their work. The firm has an interesting history, with links to two of England's other great firms, Dunhill and Charatan, whose influence can occasionally be seen in Sasieni pipes.

Most important, there is the pipe itself. Sometimes collectors seem to forget the ultimate purpose of a pipe is to deliver a great smoke. Pre-Transition Sasienis fulfilled this purpose admirably, and continue to do so. The old Sasienis were renowned for being extremely dry-smoking, and even today a well-cared-for Sasieni will deliver a cool, dry smoke, even though the pipe may be over 70 years old. While Pre-Transition Sasienis are usually available only on a pre-smoked basis, occasionally one can still be found unsmoked by the fortunate collector.

On top of all this, the pipe is truly pleasing to the eye. The wood is full-grained, usually featuring striking cross-cuts and astonishing bird's-eye, as well as the occasional straight grain. The Four and Eight Dot, as well as the early One Dot, pipes always had clean bowls. Any pipe with even a tiny fill was relegated to the "second" line.

One virtue of Sasienis that I rarely if ever see commented on deserves mention here. The Sasieni shape line, particularly prior to the war, has an undeserved reputation for being limited and overly conservative. Yet by 1935 their catalog listed no fewer than 50 different shapes! As one acquires more of these pipes one will continually be surprised at the many unusual shapes, which show, perhaps, the influence of Charatan. Anyone who has ever seen the shape known as the Exeter, which can only be described as a sort of freehand bull moose, will know what I mean.

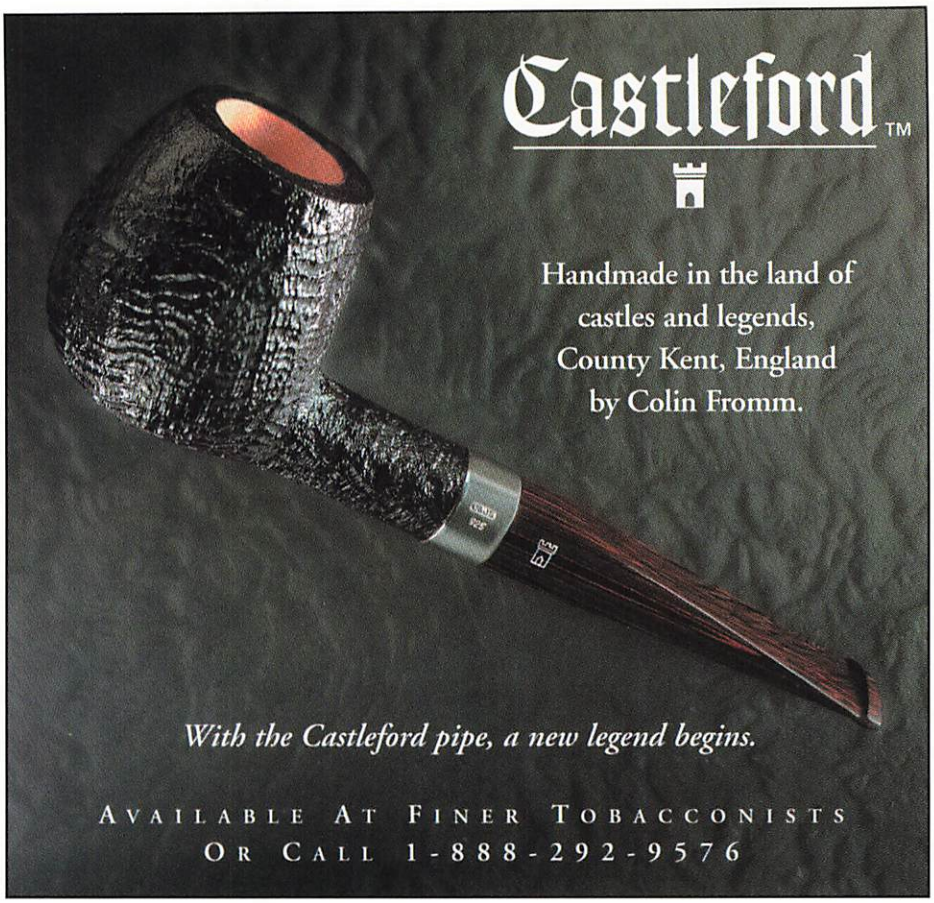
Besides the Exeter, I have in my own collection a 1920s One Dot shaped like a clay pipe, complete with tilted bowl and a heel underneath, and a 1970s era Two Dot, which can only be described as a tilt bowl, diamond shank pear (Sasieni used the descriptive town names only on the Four and Eight Dot series). The Sasieni pipe is quite literally full of surprises. I have no doubt as I continue adding to my own collection that I will discover yet more unusual shapes.

Sasieni was also a pioneer in the concept of "Ladies' Pipes." Three styles, the Argyle, the Montrose, and the Dorset were designed specifically for ladies. Unlike many so-called ladies' pipes, these pipes did not mar the finish with colored lacquer, or have a bowl so small that the lady in question could get only a five-minute smoke. Instead, they had reasonably sized bowls, and long slender stems and shanks. The Argyle and Montrose were carved and smooth versions of a Billiard, respectively, and the Dorset was a carved oval-shaped bowl. These pipes could be enjoyed by anyone who simply wanted a smaller, slimmer pipe, as the finishes are exactly the same as the rest of the Sasieni line.

Finally, there are the dots. This may sound a bit silly to the non-Sasieni collector, but Sasieni collectors know exactly what I mean. Sasieni collectors have a fascination with the striking logo, which is both distinctive yet tasteful. Over the years, the dots have changed both in size and color (although many of the seeming color "variations" are simply a result of aging). Over the years the dots ranged in color from light blue to a vivid sky blue. Many collectors are as enthralled with the dot variations as with the pipes themselves!

The delights of Sasieni pipes are almost endless. They deliver a great smoke, visual enjoyment and maybe even the possibility of monetary appreciation. They deserve to take their place next to the other great collectible pipes of England's recent past, and perhaps, with more understanding on the part of collectors, they will. *P&T*

This is a updated version of an article that first appeared in *Pipe Friendly* magazine, P.O. Box 13781, Torrance, CA 90503; telephone 310.549.0439.



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Starting a tobacco cellar

A little patience and a small investment in tobacco will offer an astonishing return in quality and smoking pleasure.

by Chuck Stanion

You need to be actively storing and aging tobacco.

In the first place, tobacco is never going to be cheaper than it is today. I'm sorry to sound pessimistic, but taxes aren't going to decrease any time soon. Neither are production costs. And then there's inflation—don't get me started on that.

But the financial aspect of cellaring tobacco isn't that important. What you save by buying today probably won't profit you as well as a good mutual fund. But you also have to take into account the availability of your favorite tobaccos.

Many tobaccos just aren't made anymore, or aren't being imported into the United States. If you are a Balkan Sobranie fan, you know what I mean. Don't you hate flying to Europe every time you run out? Also recently withdrawn from the market are Amphora, St. Bruno and Capstan. And there are some tobaccos, such as many Esoterica blends, that go through periodic droughts of availability. As I write this, I haven't seen a tin of Penzance or Dorchester locally in months.

And, sadly, you want to consider that tobacco may someday be so controlled by Federal bureaucracy that its flavor no longer resembles the original. But the most important reason for storing tobaccos is that good quality tobacco improves with aging. What you buy today will taste better tomorrow, and can transform into the sublime within a few years. If you read our last issue, you already know something about duvatrienediols, the Maillard reaction, the chemical evolution of flavor compounds and some other processes responsible for enhancing tobacco's flavor as it ages. So we know that tobacco does age, we know the basics about how tobacco ages; now we need to figure out how to take advantage of it.

First you have to decide what blends you wish to age. This is no simple task. You don't want a tobacco cellar containing only one or two particular blends. Tastes change, after all. My favorite blend today is not what my favorite blend was five years ago. Also, the tobacco itself may surprise you. A blend you typically don't care for might stun you with a new complexity and enhanced flavor after it's aged a few years. It would be a shame to have only one tin of such a tobacco.

However, you probably know what basic types of blends appeal to you, and you should concentrate on those, along with a few blends that you suspect may mature nicely, even if they don't do much for you now. Still, if you positively hate Latakia, for instance, don't waste your time on blends heavy with Latakia. You may like it better after it has aged, but chances are you still won't like it. Likewise, if you don't like black Cavendish, don't cellar it. But perhaps that's a poor example, since even if you do like black Cavendish, it's one tobacco that won't improve significantly with aging. Typical drugstore blends that are heavily aromatic or primarily composed of bland, low-quality Burley won't improve enough to bother storing them. But there are plenty of other tobaccos out there that you like, and they will provide you with the best results. You might consider concen-

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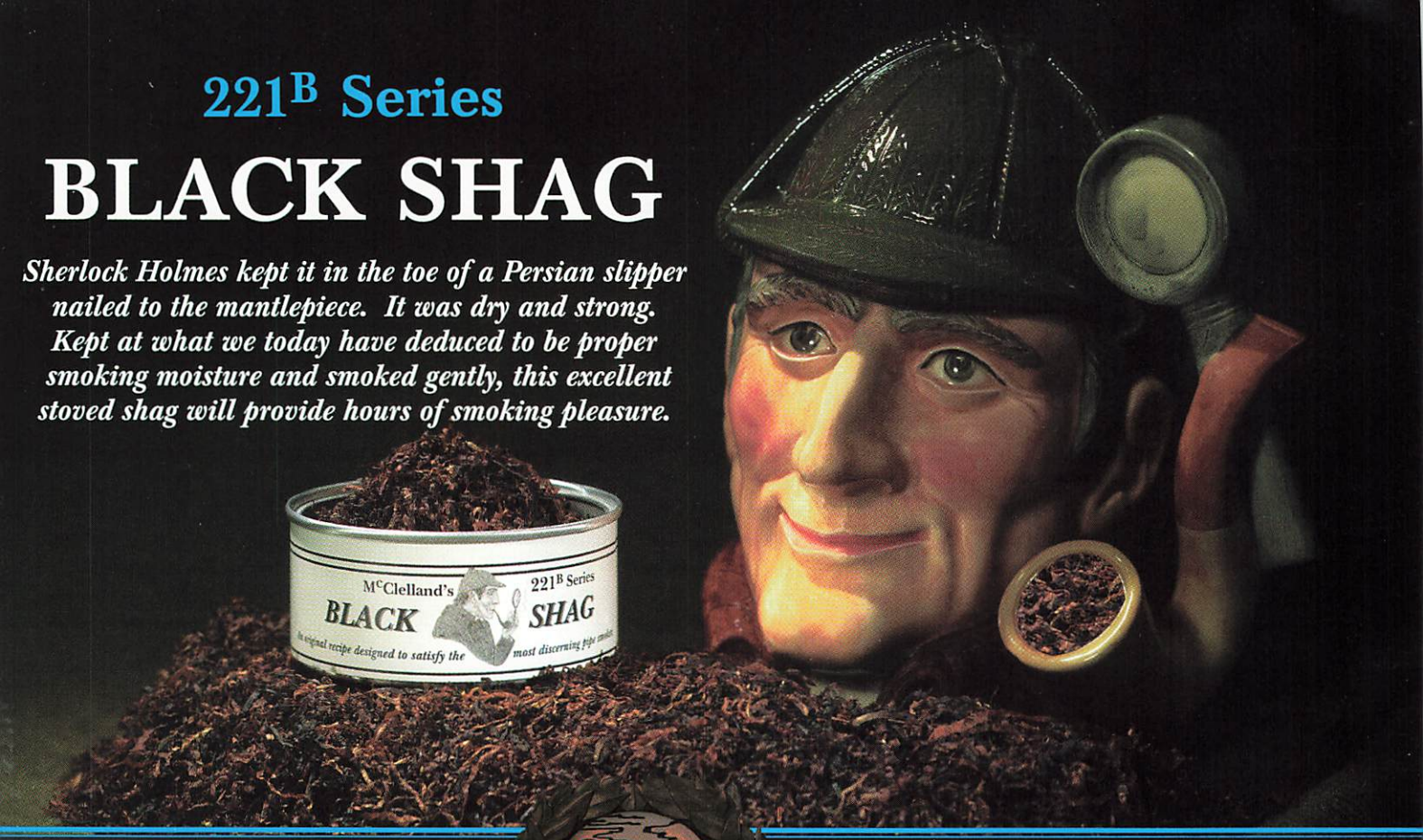

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I would recommend, though, that you not altogether disregard Virginia blends, even if you don't care for them now. Virginias will mature dramatically, and will demonstrate the most significant improvement. If you currently can take or leave Virginias, perhaps because they smoke a little hot for you, or because they are a little too biting, age some and try again later. Virginia tobaccos mellow significantly with age, and offer some of the most satisfying and complex flavor you could hope for. I recently had the opportunity to smoke some 20-year-old McClelland's #27 Virginia, and it was a near-religious experience. I still wake in the night crying because I didn't start cellaring this blend 20 years ago.

You will probably want to store and age both tinned and bulk tobaccos. Tins offer more convenience, but are more expensive. Also, many tinned blends are not available in bulk. It is important not to open tins if you want to store them long-term. Once air has been introduced into a vacuumed tin, the tobacco is likely to dry out, as they are difficult to re-seal, though you could place the entire tin in plastic and protect it that way. But it's easier just to leave the tins closed until you're ready to smoke their contents.

The most important thing to remember about tins is to keep them in a dry place. You do not want them in a humidor. There should be no air exchange anyway, so why keep them damp? Moisture offers the most danger to the long-term well-being of tins, because you want to avoid rust. Rust will eat through the tin and spoil the tobacco. If you like to buy older tins, be very careful of those that exhibit any rust. Make sure the seal is unbroken and, if it is vacuum sealed, that pressure is still intact—that is, that the lid is still slightly concave, not bowed out. Try shaking the tin, too. If the contents sound like rice in a tin that has lost its pressure, it is very likely no longer of any smoking value.

A cedar chest would be perfect for storing tins, because the cedar tends to absorb moisture. Cedar is not good for loose tobacco, unless you enjoy the cedar flavoring that will transfer to your smoke, but it is fine for unopened tins. Such a chest is not imperative, though. A closet in your home or shelves in your basement will work fine, too, as long as the temperature remains relatively constant.

The best temperature for long-term aging is between 55 and 65 degrees Fahrenheit. A little warmer and it will age at a somewhat accelerated rate, but a cool environment provides more homogeneous aging. Don't allow your tobacco to freeze, as freezing will disrupt the cellular structure of the leaf as well as completely override the aging processes that you are trying to promote. You may keep your tobacco in a freezer if your only goal is to maintain a lifetime supply without enhancing the current flavor, but it will not benefit from any aging.

If you want to excavate a tobacco cellar under your home and maintain it at 60 degrees, that would work great. If you have a wine cellar—and who doesn't?—that's perfect. However, perhaps you'd like to age some tobacco in one or more of your European summer homes where you have not yet built a wine cellar. In that case, room temperature storage is adequate.

I have spoken with collectors who do not feel that constant cool temperatures are particularly important for their tobacco. One Florida collector keeps his tobacco in a simple shed, and he says the

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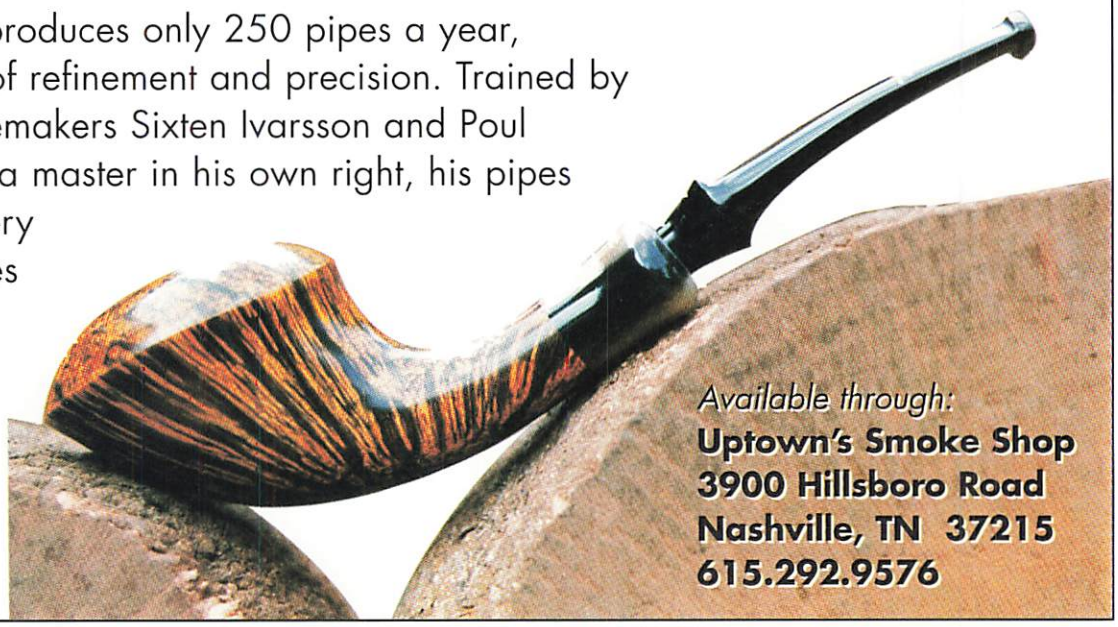

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summer heat has had no ill effect on his tobaccos—some of which have been stored for many years. Several sources have recommended keeping a few tins in one's car, where the summer heat will, they say, provide a nicely aged flavor in a few short months. That is something you will have to decide for yourself. Certainly trying it with a few tins for short-term experimentation would be educational. However, a more conservative approach to the long-term aging of large numbers of valuable tins seems prudent.

So the tins are easy to store, but, as previously mentioned, tins are expensive. Buying tobacco in bulk is a great way to save money. Many blends are available in five-pound bags—that's how your tobacconist buys them, and they would probably be happy to sell them that way. But storing bulk tobacco for long-term aging requires a little work.

Before storing bulk tobacco, it is important to make sure its humidity is correct. You don't want it to clump together from dampness, and you don't want it to fall apart with dryness. You can always leave it out to dry for a while until it has the approximate moisture level you like. If it is too dry, spread it out on a towel and lightly mist it with distilled water before storing it. Do not store tobacco that is too wet, as you risk mold.

There is some debate on whether to compress bulk tobacco for storing or to leave it loose. The argument for loose storage is that the tobacco tends to age a bit more quickly and evenly. However, compressed tobacco will "marry" better, combining the separate flavors within a blend. It is a personal choice, and you will have to experiment to see which you prefer. For very long storage, say 10 or more years, it probably will make little difference, while storage of only a year or two would benefit from compression. Some blends are available in pressed blocks, and these also stack nicely if you wish to leave them in that form. Flake tobacco is already pressed and cut, and it is not necessary to separate it further for loose aging.

You will have to make a conscious decision concerning packaging material. Blender Steven Books reports that plastic will help your tobacco maintain its individual characteristics, and that you will still be able to distinguish the different components of a blend stored in plastic. Glass storage, he says, will make the blend taste stronger and richer. Again, you will have to experiment and make your own choice.

One problem with plastic, however, is that it will allow some exchange of air, unless you use very thick, high-quality plastic. Trash bags and sandwich bags are not going to be adequate. The thick plastic used for long-term food storage is quite good. Just check the tobacco occasionally. If you open your storage closet after a couple of months and the aroma of tobacco wafts out, then the seal or the plastic you are using is not working as well as it should. You shouldn't smell tobacco that is properly sealed.

The heavy plastic bags that are sold in conjunction with home vacuuming and heat-sealing food storage systems are great. And these vacuum systems are terrific for storing tobacco. They won't provide a perfect vacuum, of course, but you don't want a perfect vacuum anyway. The system we used for the accompanying photos cost about $120 at a kitchen supply store. It evacuates the air from and heat-seals the bag in one step. It's somewhat expensive, but you can buy one for your wife on her birthday and use it when she isn't around. And if you start to put away hundreds of dollars worth of tobacco, it's a small comparative

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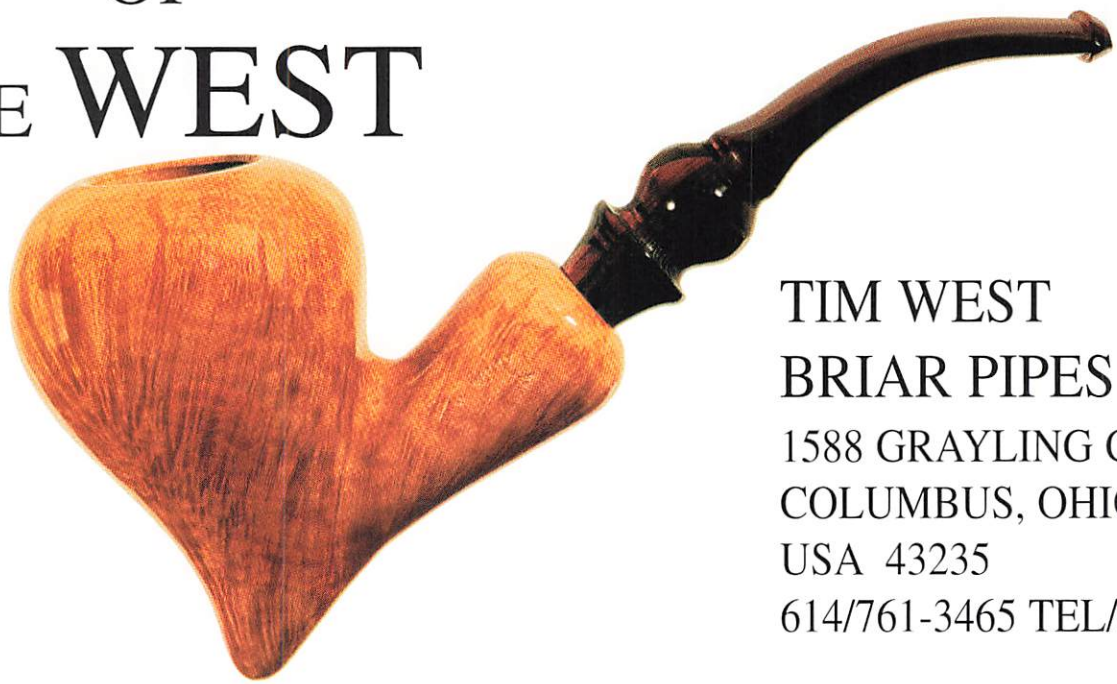

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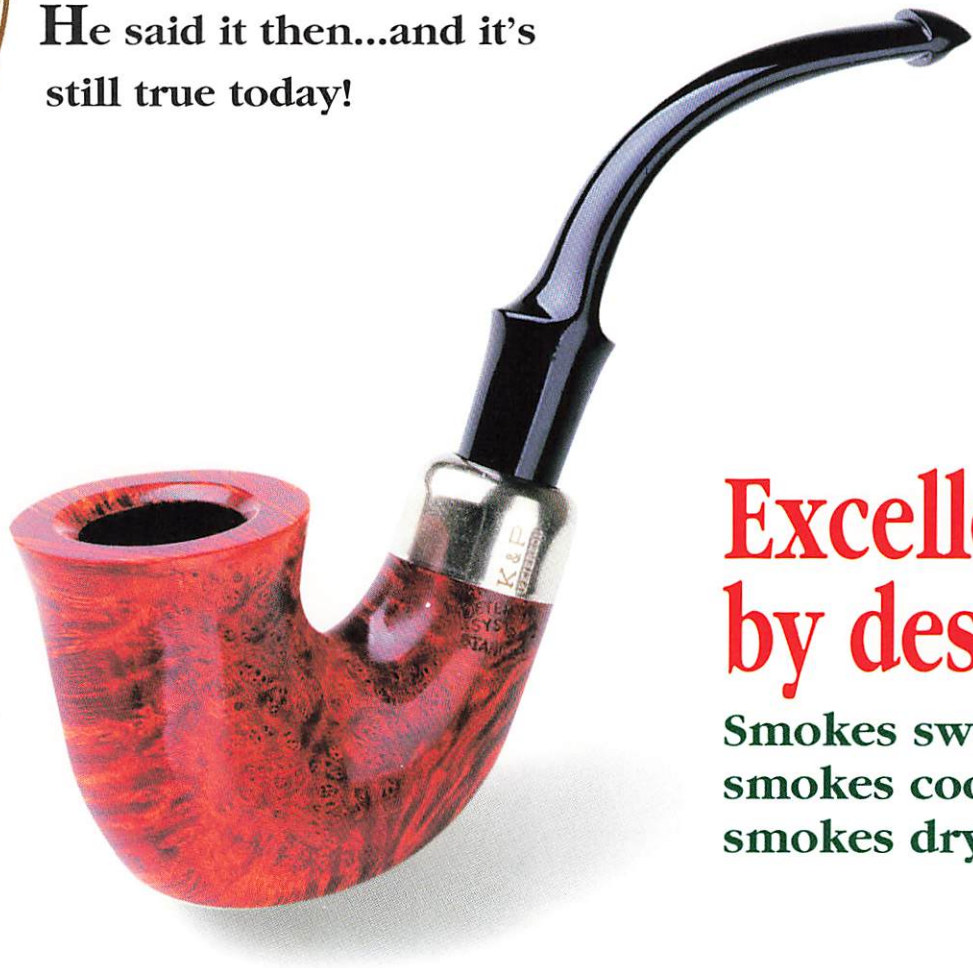

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PIMO

THE SINGLE SOURCE FOR PIPE MAKERS SINCE 1972

investment. A unit for heat-sealing plastic bags would be handy, regardless of whether you choose to vacuum-seal the bags or not, because you can reseal the bag if you choose to taste the tobacco after a year or so. Just leave enough room at the top of the bag so that after you cut it at the seal, you have room to heat-seal it again. You can easily reseal a bag 10 or 12 times this way. Another strategy is to vacuum-seal the larger portion of a particular "vintage" while keeping a smaller amount in a jar or vacuum-packed bag for tasting. So if you have five pounds of a blend, you can seal up four pounds while keeping one pound in a jar for testing without dipping into the four-pound mother lode.

The vacuum system works with Mason jars too. Remember that there are two different kinds of canning jars—those with the hinged ball tops and metal pressure clips, and those with the flat, screw-down lids. The vacuum system works with the latter, as there is an attachment that fits over the top of the jar and evacuates the air. The clamp-type canning jars are best for loose, non-pressurized tobacco storage. They will maintain the original humidity of the tobacco almost perfectly. You can still press the tobacco into the jar pretty tightly—it's going to settle over time anyway.

Tupperware works well for aging up to a year or so. However, since the plastic tends to pick up the aroma of the tobacco, its long-term storage efficiency is suspect. But it sure is easy to use. It's good for storing open tins in as well, for those blends that you don't smoke quickly enough to keep from drying out in the tin.

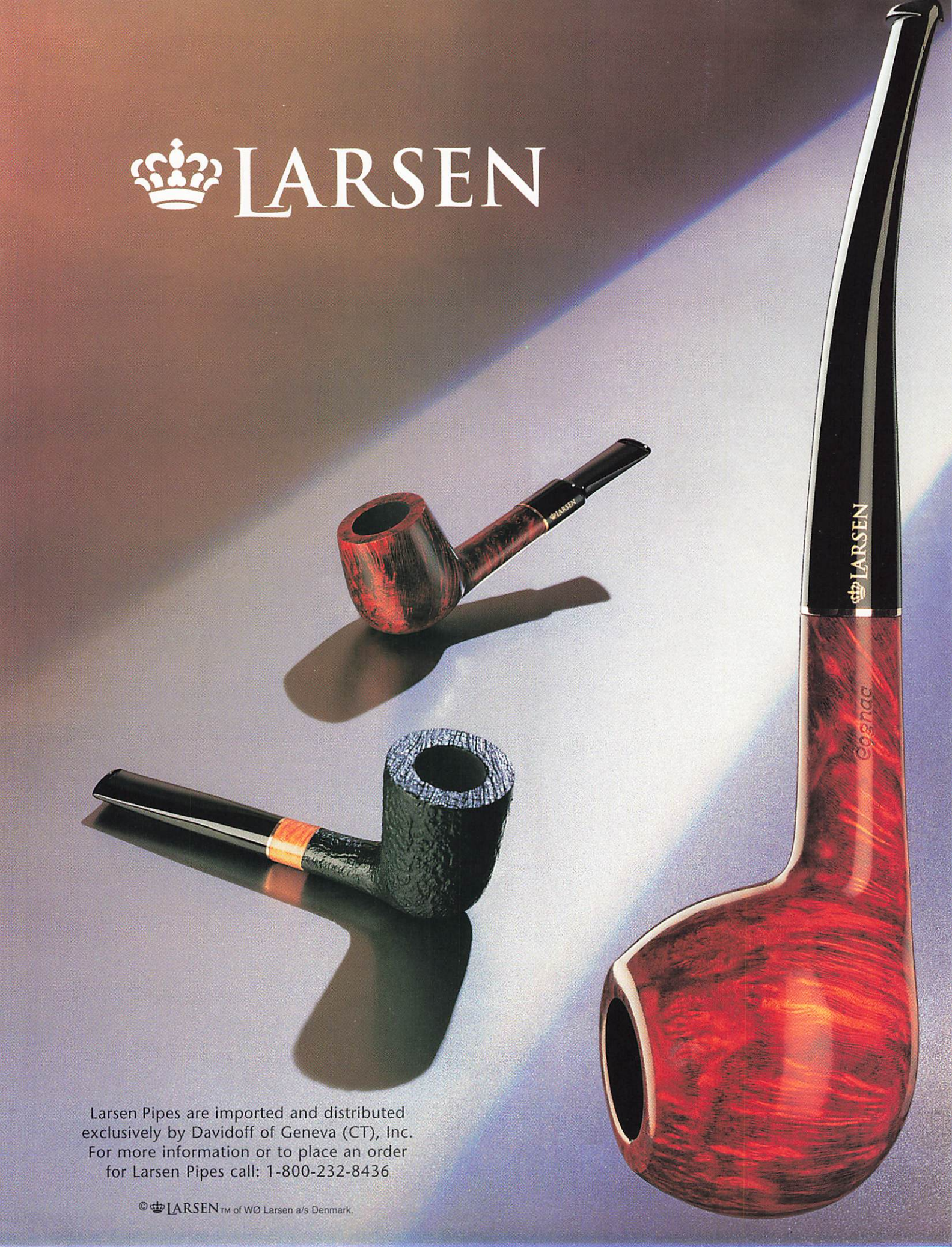
Whether you are aging your tobacco in tins, plastic or Mason jars, remember to date it with the month and the year that it is put away.

How big an inventory you wish to build is something else for you to decide. A full year's worth would be a good recommendation, and you can set it up so that you always smoke tobacco that has aged for a year. Here's how: For the next year, every time you buy tobacco to smoke, buy the same amount to put away. Whenever you add a tin to your cellar, put it at the back of the shelf, moving the older tobacco to the front. When the tobacco at the front is a year old (or five or 10—however old you wish) start smoking it. However—and this is imperative—ALWAYS replace that tin with a new one put in the back. This will rotate the tins forward and give you a steady supply of aged tobacco.

You should also keep a notebook, or maybe just a small file of three-by-five cards, as a log for making notes on the progress of your tobacco cellar.

You will want to keep track of when you added to your cellar, as well as the type and brand of tobacco added. You may also wish to have a section for tasting your tobaccos. Write down your impressions of the tobacco before aging. You may want to include your assessment in categories such as mellowness, bite, sweetness, bitterness and how full the flavor is overall. You may want to gauge these categories at different stages of the smoke, such as how it tastes midway through a bowl as well as at the finish. Then you can make comparisons as the tobacco ages. How does the sweetness evolve? Does the bitterness at the finish disappear at Year Two? Does the blend improve up to Year Four, but change little after that? Does the density of the smoke increase or decrease? On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the blend at different stages of aging?

Aging and tracking your tobacco is a dimension of pipe smoking that will enhance your appreciation for and enjoyment of the hobby. Many of us adhere to the philosophy that we should smoke less, but enjoy it more. Whether you smoke less is up to you, but you should always find ways to enjoy it more, and, in aged tobacco, the potential is endless. *P&T*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Pipe Sculptor

Alfred Baier has turned his love for pipes into a supply business, a pipecarving workshop and a custom pipemaking enterprise

by Chuck Stanion

What components would you include in planning the perfect two-day getaway? Many people would consider a couple of summer days in the scenic mountains of Vermont irresistible. But to improve on that you might want to stay in a beautiful, historic home next to a swiftly running, melodious trout stream. Add to that a pair of intelligent, interesting and friendly hosts with a full library pertaining to your favorite subject—pipes. Now make those hosts eminently experienced in pipe history and manufacturing and endowed with a willingness to converse on the subject to your heart's content.

Perfect, right? But wait. Let's be *really* self-indulgent.

Now add a fully equipped pipemaking workshop complete with an expert, award-winning pipemaker to show you how everything works and dedicated to one specific mission: to help you carve and finish a pipe of your own design so that you can walk away at the end of the two days smoking that pipe.

Welcome to the home of Al and Ginny Baier.

Al and Ginny own Pimo, a company that supplies tools and materials for the home pipemaker. Both are experienced woodcarvers. Al has done numerous plaques and sculptures in wood as well as his pipecarving, and Ginny is an expert in rendering life-sized songbirds in wood. However, the woodcarving has slowed for both of them. Al concentrates on his figural pipe commissions now, and Ginny hasn't carved birds in several years, concentrating instead on running Pimo.

One quite successful leg of that business is the two-day pipemaking workshops held during two months each summer. They have been

Al and Ginny Baier stand in front of a metal, smoking-bird sculpture outside their home in Manchester Center, Vermont.

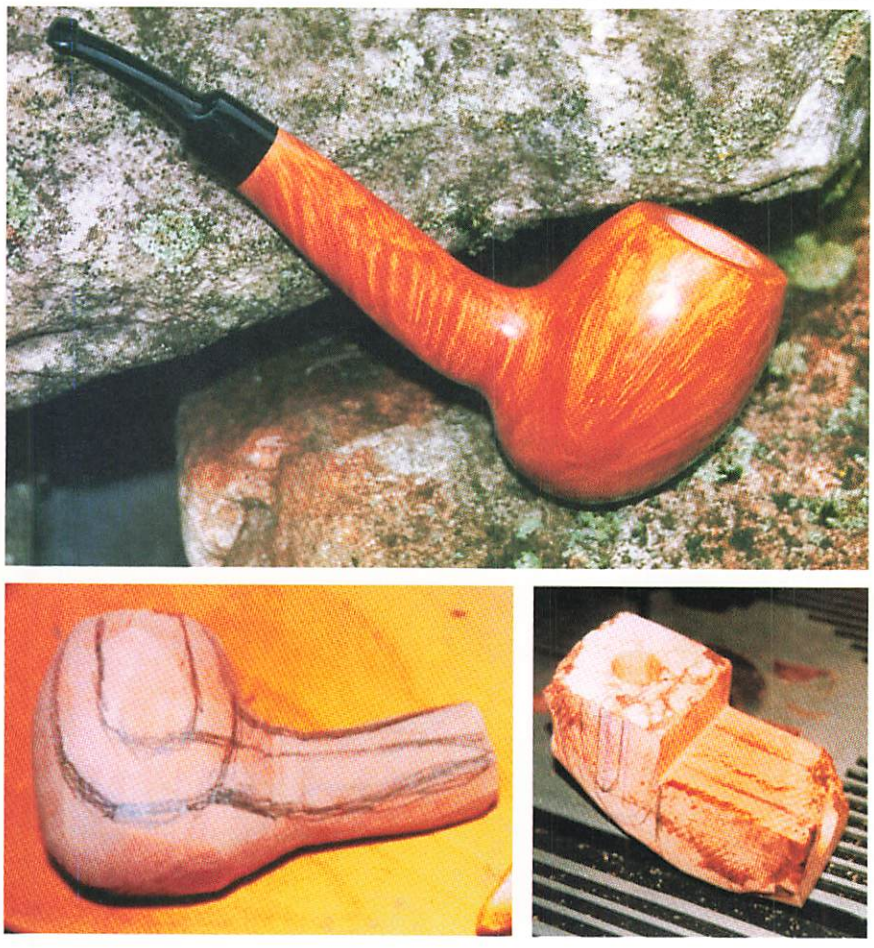
Al Baier possesses the perfect combination of temperament and talent for teaching pipemaking.

going on since 1995, and have turned lots of regular guys into pipecarvers.

When I first learned of the workshops, I did some research on Al Baier and concluded that a man of his immense talent must provide a truly inspiring workshop—a workshop I desperately wanted to attend. So I developed a complex and devious plan whereby *P&T* would hold a pipecarving contest and the winner would attend Al's pipecarving getaway. I, of course, would go along to report on the event and, as long as I was there anyway, take advantage of the workshop and make a pipe.

Yes, I exploited my job for my own personal benefit. You would, too, but I got here first.

Trever Talbert won that carving contest, and he and his wife, Emily, chose two days last July to visit the Baiers. Trever had become a professional pipemaker in the interim between the contest and the workshop, and he knew much more than I. He needed little help from Al, except for an introduction to some of the machinery that he was not accustomed to. I, however, needed *lots* of help.



The author made the above pipe while attending Al Baier's workshop.

Al Baier possesses the perfect combination of temperament and talent for teaching pipemaking. He is easygoing, soft-spoken and he has a gift for listening. This is a workshop in which your own ideas are given priority. Al does not tell you how to make a pipe—he listens to what you want to do with your own design, and then he shows you how to achieve it.

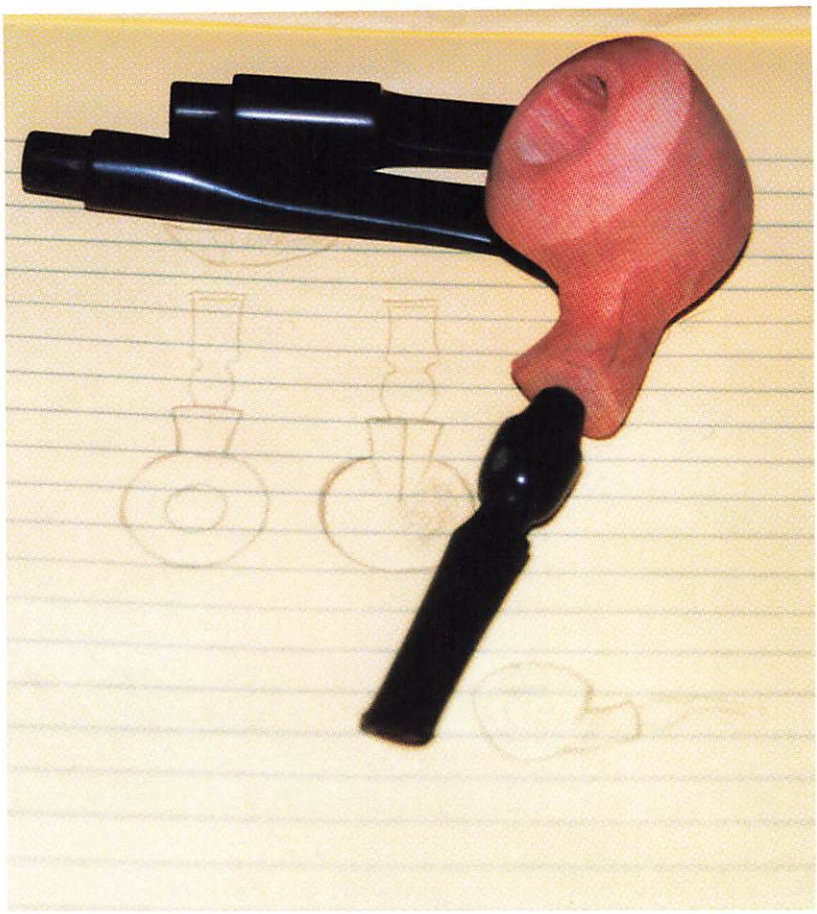
The first night we all sat and talked in the Baier's comfortable home, which is a historic wonder of ancient beams and flooring and original workmanship from the mid-1800s. Not the whole house. The original structure has been added to over the long decades. But it is permeated with a personality reserved for well-loved homes that have experienced time as no human being can, and it is natural to feel creative within its walls. That night we drew our plans for our pipes and talked late into the night.

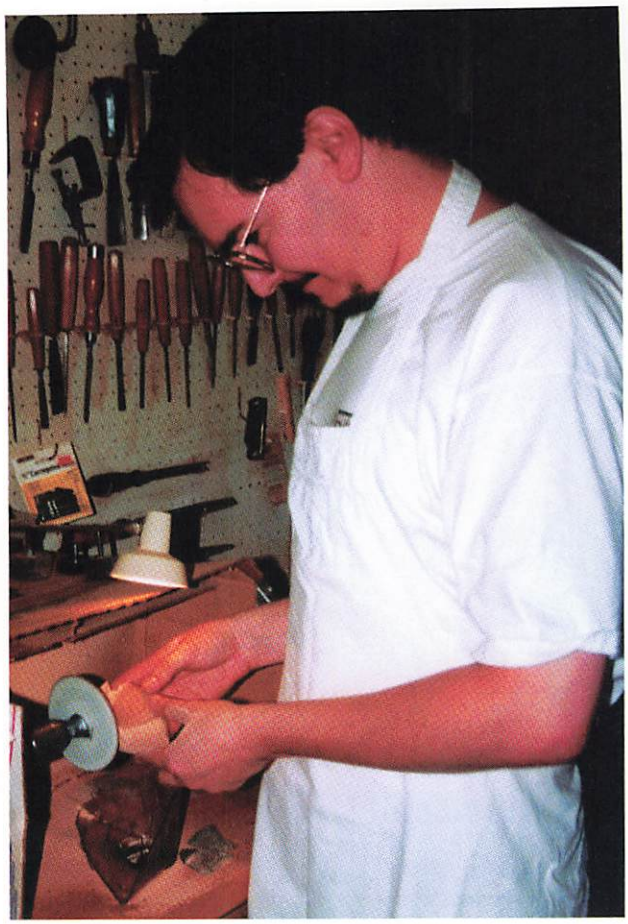
At 8 a.m. we arose to a fine breakfast and then entered the workshop. Trever had arrived at a design customized for the particular block of briar that Al had provided. He had carefully gauged the grain and extrapolated where it was going, where its weaknesses were, and developed a plan to take full advantage of that piece of wood. I, however, had not done that, because I couldn't. The briar just looked like wood to me, and I had tried to guess what the grain was doing inside the block, but had given up. I just drew a pipe I thought would be nice to have.

Let me state here, however, that my final pipe looks nothing like my original drawing. During various phases of construction, I found myself modifying the pipe to accommodate a mystifying number of total screw-ups. This pipecarving game is not easy.

First we drew the basic shapes on the blocks of wood and drilled the tobacco chambers and smoke holes and mortises. That was tricky. The smoke hole for my pipe decided to enter the tobacco chamber a little too low, so I had to spend considerable time sanding out the bottom of the chamber to rectify my poor drilling. We cut excess wood from the blocks with the bandsaw, added stems, drew the outline of the designs again, then started grinding and sanding, stopping now and then to redraw the design.

I kept up pretty well with Trever, not because I am a talented woodworker, but because his meticulous nature obligates him to go slowly. He never actually finished his pipe during our stay, opting instead to take it home to finish in his own workshop. *My* home woodworking shop, however, includes only a broken machete and some dried-out





Trever Talbert works from his own design in carving a pipe at Al Baier's pipemaking workshop.

spackling compound, so I was motivated to finish my pipe in Vermont.

Al was supernaturally patient. "You're going to have trouble with that shank shaped that way," he said. But I insisted. A while later I showed him the shambles my pipe had become. He said, "OK, we can fix that by redrilling the mortise." Later, when I approached him with more separate pieces than most pipes include, he said, "No problem, we can reshape the shank and choose a different mouthpiece to try to fit the new design." And later: "Don't worry, we have plenty of mouthpieces; we can find one for that design, too."

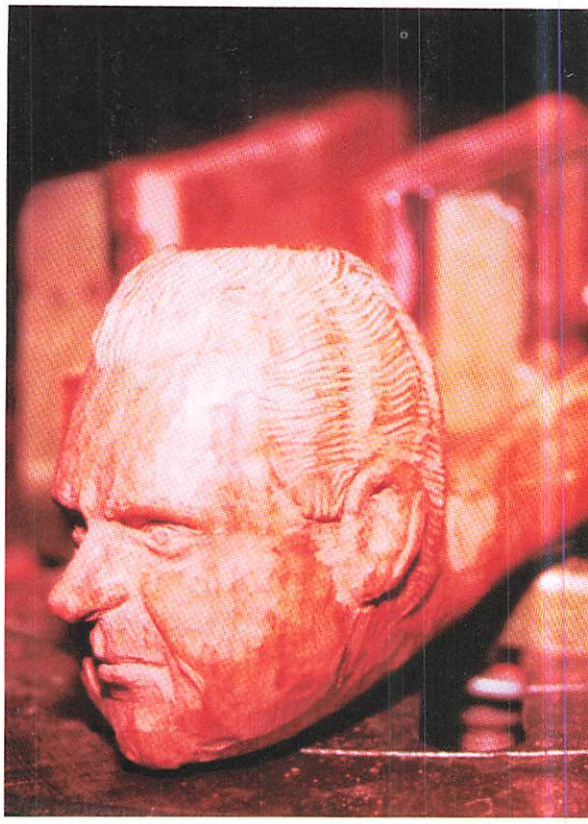
After two days I held in my hand a finished pipe, and I am immensely proud of it. There is nothing quite so satisfying as smoking a pipe you have made yourself. And it turned out pretty well. Since then I have shown it to some of the finest pipemakers in the world and solicited their comments. Many of them exhibited something akin to fear as they appraised it, perhaps thinking I would soon be stealing their hard-earned clientele. Some of them, holding the pipe gingerly between two fingers—as a form of respect, no doubt—actually appeared to be in physical pain as they examined it, probably depressed that an inexperienced carver like myself could incorporate innovations that they had not considered. Others just stared blankly in a stupefied sort of shock, which I chose to interpret as the highest form of praise.

Carving that pipe was a terrific experience, and there are few pipemakers around who would have been able to coax it out of me the way Al Baier did. He is certainly talented enough that he could concentrate all his time on his own pipes, rather than dedicate so much of it to helping those of us new to the craft get started. But he enjoys doing just that, and it is what Pimo is really all about.

Pimo has invested itself in supplying the hobbyist with everything necessary for making pipes at home, including a complete inventory of pipemaking tools, briar, stems and the only comprehensive book dedicated to pipemaking, *Pimo's Guide to Pipe Crafting at Home*. In fact, long before he bought Pimo, that book is what helped Al Baier get started in pipemaking.

"I learned a great deal from the Pimo book," he says, "but also from a lot of trial and error. My woodcarving was done with gouges and chisels, and that's how I attacked my first briar block—using my old woodcarving methods. And then I found better and more efficient methods. Briar is so much harder than other woods. I'm not engineering-minded at all, so the book helped me there." ▶

Pimo has invested itself in supplying the hobbyist with everything for home pipemaking.



While Baier makes a number of standard and freehand shapes (above), his expertise and preference is for figural pipes, such as the Richard Nixon pipe at right, which is pictured in a rough, unfinished stage.

"...a tractor-trailer pulled into our driveway, full of briar and stems."

It helped Al turn his already considerable woodcarving skills into pipemaking skills. So much so, in fact, that he won the Tinder Box pipecarving contest in 1981 with the two-headed horse pipe that he still has in his workshop display cabinet. "I'd made several pipes before winning the Tinder Box contest, but nothing exceptional. It was all new to me. It was another form of woodcarving."

"I worked on that pipe for six months, off and on," says Al. "It's the only pipe I ever made with the help of a wax prototype. Carving it in wax first made it easier to execute. It anticipated design problems." He has since turned down many offers to buy it. "I have made several single horse heads for people," he says. "But some pipes just aren't for sale. That one has sentimental value because it won that contest. The Abe Lincoln pipe in the same display case is another one I keep. I made that one for myself because I'm a Lincoln fan."

Al was running his own advertising company when he won that contest in 1981. "But I was beginning to make pipes just as a hobby. In 1983 I retired after selling my business. I still made pipes from 1983 to 1986, and I was beginning to sell them."

It was 1986 when Al and Ginny reached a point in their lives where they decided to strike out in a new direction. Ginny remembered camping in Vermont and how fabulously beautiful the country was. "I said to her," says Al, "'What in the world are we going to do in Vermont?' I'd driven through Vermont before, but I never saw any people, just green mountains and landscapes." But it turned out that there was civilization there after all. "There are all kinds of art museums and cultural activities. You can do interesting things seven nights a week." Once settled in Vermont and away from the hustle and business of Boston, the pipecarving became more natural for Al. "That's when I really went to work carving." A few years later, the opportunity to buy Pimo arose.

"The former owner was getting older and wanted to phase out of it. We took a chance and bought it in 1995." The Baiers bought the company sight unseen, negotiating the deal over the phone. "One day," says Ginny, "a huge tractor-trailer pulled up in our driveway, and it was full of briar and stems and books and tools...we weren't expecting quite that volume to arrive on our doorstep."

"Good thing we had that barn out there," says Al. The barn is still full—there must be hundreds of thousands of stems, and bag after bag of briar. "When we took over Pimo, we inherited a great deal of briar—crate after crate after crate of well-aged briar. We've had to supplement it from time to time, especially plateau briar. As for stems—I have enough to last easily a hundred years."

Pimo turned out to be a fair business venture. "The Pimo book sells very well, and prebored kits are popular," says Ginny. The company's top-selling item has always been briar.

Baier's interest in Abraham Lincoln resulted in a fabulous rendering of the president in pipe form. The two-headed horse is the pipe that won the Tinder Box pipecarving contest in 1981.

"You can see a progression as people get into the pipemaking," says Ginny. "First they want the book. Then they'll call for a kit or two. Then blocks of briar and stems and the tenon turning tool. But some are happy with the pre-drilled kits and continue with that." And there is quite a lot of satisfaction for the Baiers in supplying the hobby with hard-to-find supplies. "It's not the same as being a nurse and saving lives," Ginny says, laughing. "It's not that rewarding. But it is a great feeling to hear the enthusiasm of our customers. Some of them really feel it's a dream come true to find these products. They are so pleased and so excited."

"It's true," says Al. "We get people who call and say, 'My god, I've been looking for a place for 10 years where I could buy briar.' There are some terrific people in this hobby. We often get letters and photos from people who have made pipes using the book and our kits. We've seen some beautiful pipes."

Al Baier has slowed his own pipemaking, concentrating on projects that he is interested in, as opposed to cranking out pipes for retail and financial survival. His pipes are no longer available in retail shops. "I would never be able to keep up with it," he says. "I'm just not geared for production." Repeat customers and special orders keep him more than busy enough. "And I keep up an inventory for folks who drop in. When the leaves turn here I'm inundated with people who see my sign on the road. I sell more pipes in October than any six months of the year. The town is overrun with people enjoying the fall foliage."

Since Al's first love is in doing the very time-intensive figural carvings, he can't allow time to become an issue. "I prefer doing the figural pipes, but not as a steady diet," says Al. "I can work an hour to an hour and a half, and then put it aside, otherwise you can get tired and careless. With that close detail I use a magnifying glass, and I use micro tools—very small gouges and chisels. Very tiny. But you don't want to make a mistake during the final phases of carving one of those. When I get one of those commissions, I always emphasize that it will be several months before it will be ready. I just don't like to hurry them. Nobody seems to mind."

It seems to be an idyllic lifestyle, and it clearly agrees with the Baiers. "It's an old cliche," says Al, "but true just the same: Even if I didn't get paid for it I'd still do it. Every pipe is a challenge. You start off with a block that looks like every other block, but it is completely different, with its own personality. I can't think of anything that is more satisfying, more relaxing than making pipes." ***P&T***

Time is no issue when working on a figural carving.

For a price list or to order pipemaking materials, Pimo may be contacted at: Pimo, P.O. Box 2043 Butternut Lane, Manchester Center, VT 05255; telephone 802.362.3371.

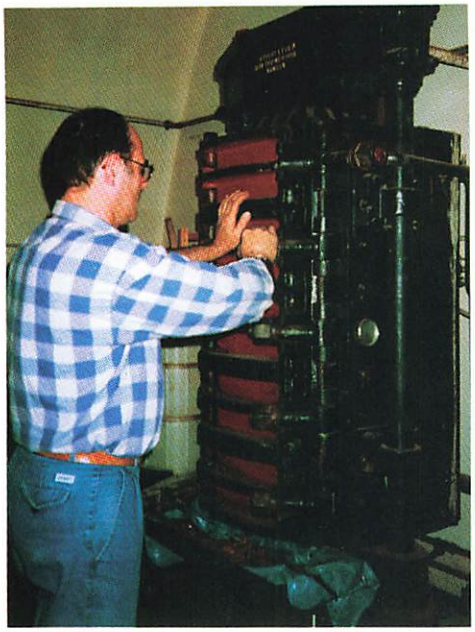
German Ingenuity

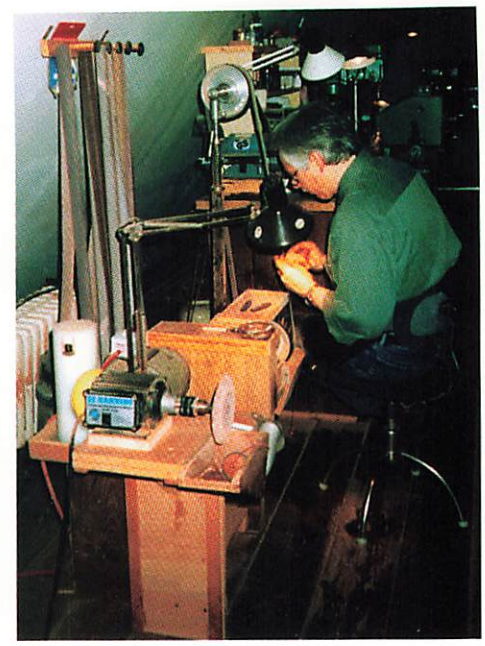
Germany's Dan Pipe and Dan Tobacco enjoy a worldwide reputation for the finest in tobaccos, pipes and service

by Rebecca Schubert

I traveled the highway east from Hamburg, Germany, in search of the "Grashof," which had grown into a vague and somewhat mysterious image in my mind during the trip. The German word can be translated as grass yard, barn, playground or circle, so as I neared the village of Curslack, I speculated on which of these descriptions would best suit the actual place. The directions I'd been given were brief and accompanied by the advice: "If you have any problems just ask for the Grashof; everyone in town knows what it is."

I drove into the tiny village, and was at once invigorated as I passed a street with the Grashof as its namesake. This must be some revered place, I reflected, as a right turn brought me to a huge old barn. Upon its roof was a sloping expanse of grass, reaching almost to the ground.





Jürgen Westphal, above left, loads the century-old English flake press. The antique flavoring drum, center, is another of Westphal's antique machines. At right is Holger Frickert in his workshop inside the 300-year-old Grashof.

The word now held meaning: a barn and a yard. Only after spending many hours within the Grashof would I learn that it also is a wonderful playground and circle of camaraderie.

A stair led to the second floor of the Grashof, the home of "Dan Pipe," a German tobacco, pipe and cigar business. Instantly I was greeted and offered a cup of coffee. "Beautiful," I thought, already feeling at home in this place. My coffee arrived with Herr Rainer Tornow, the business manager and co-owner of Dan Pipe, who soon introduced me to this business within the Grashof that was started only 28 years ago. Tornow is a quiet and friendly man, efficient and willing to talk about the business that has been so important to him.

In 1970, Tornow explains, schoolteacher and dedicated pipe smoker Dr. Heiko Behrens ventured north of his home in Germany to vacation in Denmark. He was in search of some good ice cream, tasty tobacco and a unique new pipe. These treasures he found, then brought back home to share with friends.

His friends' delight in these gifts turned into requests for more. Behrens' personal trips to Denmark soon became insufficient to fulfill the demands of his acquaintances.

"Behrens has a passion for pipes," Tornow explains, "and he saw a grand opportunity. To be successful you need to take a good idea and run with it. That's just what Behrens did." It all began simply enough: by trading with Danish pipemakers. As his popularity grew, he instituted Dan Pipe and Dan Tobacco Manufacturing, two separate business entities. Dan Pipe is a retail and catalog company. Dan Tobacco is a tobacco production facility.

By 1978 the business was growing so rapidly that a new location was necessary. Behrens contracted with craftsman (and aspiring young dentist) Holger Frickert to construct and design a showroom. "Frickert was leading a class in art and design," says Tornow. "The class rebuilt the shop in the form of a boat. It was an extraordinary design, with sails atop the room." Frickert's passion for handcrafts, smoking and pipes led him to abandon dentistry and join Behrens' business. He began making repairs on pipes as well as designing his own—two beloved activities he continues to this day. "Holger has always worked with his hands," continues Tornow. "I believe he has had this skill since the cradle."

Mail-order business, retail store sales and repairs eventually became overwhelming for Behrens and Frickert. Luckily, in the ranks of this growing tobacco and pipe family was Rainer Tornow. The company was booming and needed another enthusiastic administrator. Thus the partnership was made into a three-man operation.

Tornow began in the company only part time as he was finishing university studies. "I studied theology and philosophy, but didn't feel well with it," he explains. And Tornow's enthusiasm for the smoking industry and Dan Pipe and Dan Tobacco was growing.

One of the most attractive components of the business for Tornow was its agricultural aspect: cultivating the land, growing, harvesting and using the tobacco crop. "I respected the tie to natural things and the earth," Tornow says. He explains that every Dan Tobacco blend is prepared traditionally and controlled personally by one Jürgen Westphal. The tobacco leaves are shipped in small quantities, determined by the needs of the blend, from the areas of best quality around the world, including Zaire, Zimbabwe, Argentina, India, the U.S., Syria and Cyprus. The raw crop is held in boxes and bins in Westphal's "personal laboratory" at Dan Tobacco Manufacturing, GmbH, in Lauenburg/Elbe, located about 40 minutes from the Grashof. These leaves are brought from the third to the first floor, where Westphal personally mixes, presses, pressurizes and cuts the tobacco.

Dan Tobacco is housed in a huge, old former grain malting house, built right into the side of a mountain. The town has been there forever. A nearby cemetary has headstones from the 1200s. But still it remains wild country. Employees, leaving work in the evening, must keep an eye out for the wild boar that sometimes wander into the parking area. Enclosed by anywhere from several feet to several

Part-time carver and repairman Hasam Gezer, left, bores the smoke hole in a briar pipe. Independent artist and pipecarver Manuel Shaabi, above, shapes one of his signature claw pipes.

hundred feet of rock, the temperature and humidty in the building varies no more than two and a half percent. The tobacco warehouse section in this facility is gigantic, with floor-to-ceiling bales and boxes of tobacco stretching into the distance. Where some companies might have a few pounds of Latakia, Dan Tobacco has hundreds of pounds of both Cyprian and Syrian Latakia stored.

However, quantity is not the most important factor. Behrens runs his companies with one imperative philosophy: Quality is essential. Without high quality, no quantity is sufficient.

One of the most noticeable aspects of the facility is its incredible cleanliness. Eveything is maintained in spotless condition. And everything is run with clocklike precision.

Jürgen Westphal's blending area is a collection of antique drums and a modest set of shelves containing the preservatives and casings of his secret tobacco blends. Upon these shelves natural sugars, tamarind, water, honey, syrups and other spices are found. From these ingredients, 158 varieties of sauces are produced.

Westphal explains that his additives are restricted by German law to contain the same healthy ingredients as foods. After flavoring, for some tobaccos the next step is into the tobacco compactor, where it is formed into a large brick, approximately one and one-half feet square by two inches thick.

Another option, reserved for the richer tobaccos, is processing in the century-old flake press, made by Robert Legg of London. This impressive machine heats, presses and thus matures the tobacco blend. In this process the harsh, bittertasting, raw proteins are changed to smooth, sweet-tasting sugars. The length of maturation time, Westphal adds, is determined by the need of the specific blend. Light, low-nicotine tobaccos cannot be matured in this way. Instead they are stored in a holding area where the bricks await their coming of age.

The blend is then cut in a 40-year-old machine made by Heinen. Westphal cuts every width of tobacco from flake to curly with an expertise sharpened by more than 25 years of experience. "There are not many people left knowing how, or wanting, to do this," says Tornow. Some tobaccos then have an overtaste added in the flavoring drum. Finally, the blends are taken to the second-floor packaging room where a team weighs and packs the completed tobaccos.

Most of the equipment is very old, but that is only because older equipment is better constructed. It is refurbished and updated. The tobacco presses are from the 1800s, with hydraulics added for modern efficiency. And, of course, it is immaculate machinery.

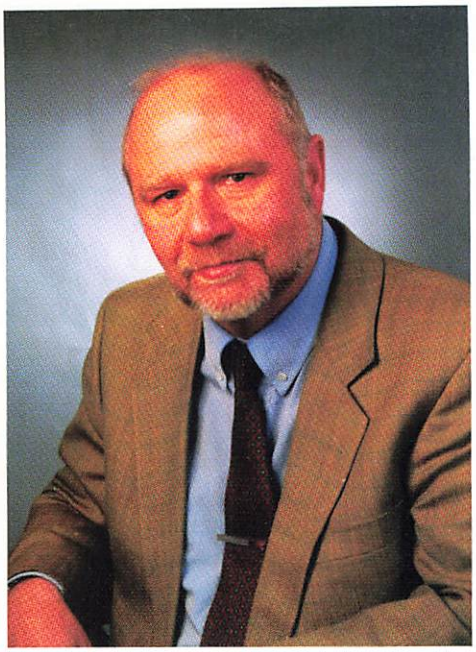
Dan Tobacco Manufacturing tobaccos are exported by Dan Pipe. It is a somewhat confusing separation of companies, but it is an effective system for operating in Germany. Dan Tobacco is primarily involved with production and importing; Dan Pipe with retail and exporting.

Dan Pipe is also immersed in high-quality pipemaking, which is treated as an art form in this company, and Behrens' fondness for the craft is evident. There is a true passion for creation in pipemaking, he says, because it is a medium in which nothing is artificial. Dan Pipe craftsmen have an appreciation for and a dedication to the quality of the handcraft. There is no machine-like production line at Dan Pipe. "It's not at all like a machine," says Tornow. "Every piece is unique. It is really one of the last niches in trade."

Dan Pipe currently has only one designer, the aforementioned Holger Frickert, and two part-time repairmen. Additionally, the company employs a private artist and pipemaker, Manuel Shaabi. Tornow explains that the foundation of Dan Pipe pipes is in the precision of form and "technical correctness, where grain is secondary." He details Shaabi's pipes as holding an incomparable quality where perfection in form is combined with exquisite ornamentation. "He combines pipemaking with carving. He has a certain 'handscript' which is identifiable. When I look at it, I can tell that he and no one else made it. This quality is hard to achieve."

In Dan Pipe's estimate, however, high-quality manufacturing would mean nothing without the final all-important philosophy of helpful, familial customer service. "I like talking to people," says Tornow, explaining how his affable appreciation for individuals has not diminished over the years. "If anyone comes here asking for assistance, they get it. It's really a win-win situation."

In the future Dan Pipe hopes to expand its retail outlets as well as Internet access. However, Behrens finds it



Above is Dan Pipes' founder and owner, Heiko Behrens. Business manager Rainer Tornow (left) lifts Perique from its storage bin.

absolutely necessary to maintain a high level of customer service. "The communication between the customer and the producer," says Tornow, "is absolutely necessary to maintain quality."

In 1994 Dan Pipe took over another Hamburg-based tobacco company, Timm Tobaccos. Under this name are four Hamburg retail outlets which distribute Dan Pipe, Timm and the entire collection of pipes, tobaccos and cigars. Another important arm of the company's operations is the Dan Pipe Catalog, which enjoys a worldwide reputation for its photography and scope, and that showcases Dan Pipe pipes and tobaccos as well as a variety of pipes and tobaccos from around the globe. Also published is a 97-page catalog detailing hundreds of cigars. While the catalogs are in German, they are accessible over the Internet through the Dan Pipe Web site (*www.danpipe.de*), where even an English version is offered.

The only U.S. distributor is C.A.O. International of Nashville, Tennessee, which provides a small selection of Dan Pipe tobaccos to more than a thousand retail outlets throughout the country. You can find some reviews of the Dan Pipe tobaccos C.A.O. imports in this issue, in the "Trial by Fire" column.

There are new and exciting ongoing developments at Dan Pipe. For example, a new Latakia flake called "Old Ironsides," which Dan Pipe and C.A.O are working together to produce. "It's a specialty you won't find any other place," says Tornow. His enthusiasm fills this old traditional structure, the Grashof. It is the perfect location for a company blending the old and the new, maintaining the traditional while developing innovations—a company like Dan Pipe. *P&T*

Dan Tobacco Manufacturing in Lauenburg/Elbe.

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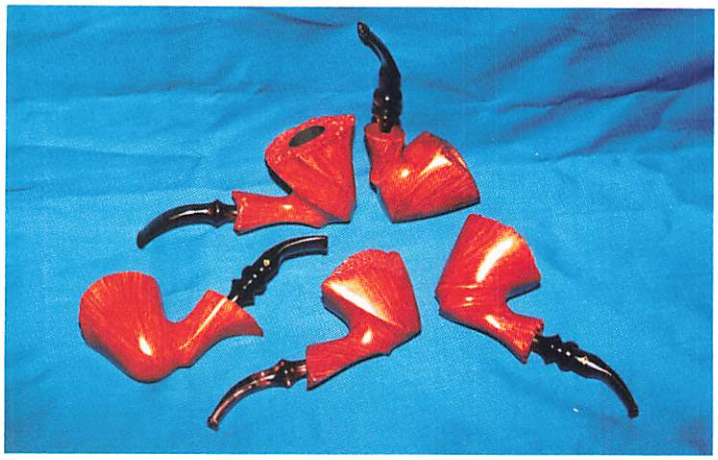

Kaywoodie Handmades

S.M. Frank & Co. has introduced a line of limited edition Kaywoodie Freehands. These pipes, made of Grecian plateau briar with lucite push stems, are stamped with a serial number that includes the production year.

Suggested retail prices range from $100 to $300. For information contact: S.M. Frank & Co., P.O. Box 789, Peekskill, NY 10566 or call at 800.431.2752, Fax 914.739.3105, e-mail *smokepipes@aol.com*.

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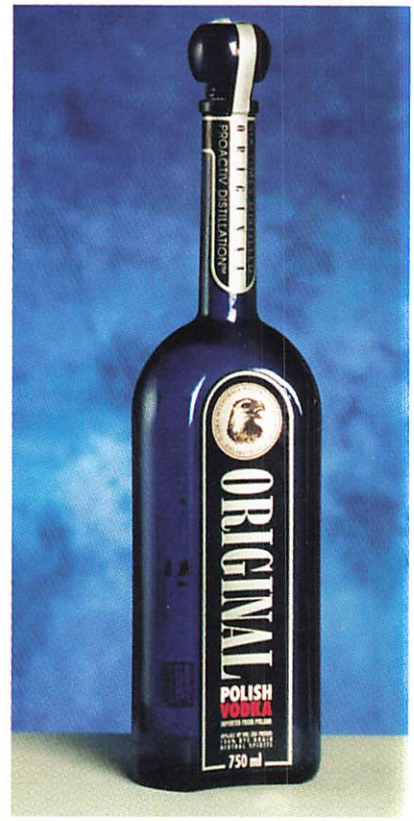
From McClelland's 221 B Series, Black Shag is offered in the fine smoking tradition of Sherlock Holmes. Packaged in sealed tins rather than Persian slippers, this stoved Virginia mixture is an excellent estimate of what the great detective must have smoked. From McClelland Tobacco company and available at fine tobacco shops everywhere.



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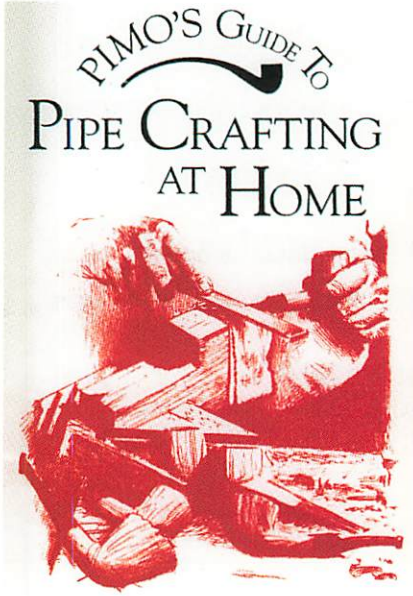
Original is imported from Poland, where vodka originated in 1564. Created from 100 percent rye, Original is filtered three times so that all congeners, aldehydes and esters are removed, making it the purest vodka possible. Available nationwide.



Pipe Crafting at Home

PIMO's classic guide to making pipes at home, this 110-page book offers detailed chapters on each step in the home pipemaking process, from drawing the outline on the briar block to drilling, shaping and finishing the pipe, as well as fitting, bending and finishing stems. It also includes a chapter on carving meerschaum. Everything you need to know about necessary tools and techniques is in this book. PIMO Inc. also carries pipemaking kits, briar, stems, pipemaking tools and all the materials you need for making your own pipe. Of special interest are PIMO's tapered drill bits for drilling tobacco chambers and an adjustable tenon-turning tool. A catalog is available by contacting PIMO Inc. at P.O. Box 2043 Butternut Lane, Manchester Center, VT 05255; telephone 802.362.3371.

London Blend

A dark flake tobacco with a subtle plum aroma and a moderate amount of Latakia, this blend should appeal to aromatic and English lovers alike. Available at retail tobacco shops, or call C.A.O. International at 615.352.0587 for information on a shop near you carrying its fine imported blends.

Bonaquisti pipes

Award-winning pipemaker Paul Bonaquisti, whose pipes have been available only at select pipe shows, has increased his production and perfected his technique to the point where he can now offer his pipes to a wider audience. For information on sources for Bonaquisti pipes, write to Paul Bonaquisti, 71 Canvass Street, Cohoes, NY 12047, or e-mail Bonaquisti@aol.com.

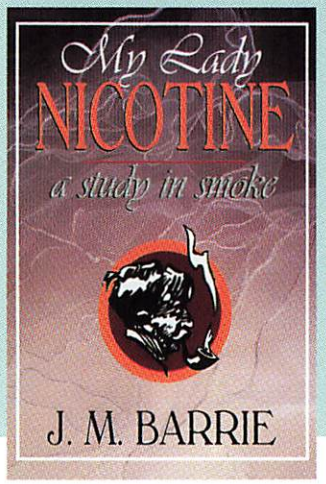
Limited-edition Castello tin

Solid silver *925/1000* reproduction of a 1972 Castello tobacco tin, not including the tobacco—though it would make a terrific statement for pulling out that exclusive aged blend on special occasions. With a suggested retail price of $385, it is a classy way to store cuff links, matches or whatever desktop paraphernalia you like. Available by special order through Castello dealers only.

For the dealer nearest you, contact Castello North America, P.O. Box 5179 Woodbridge, VA 22914; telephone 703.897.9128; or visit *www.castello.net*.

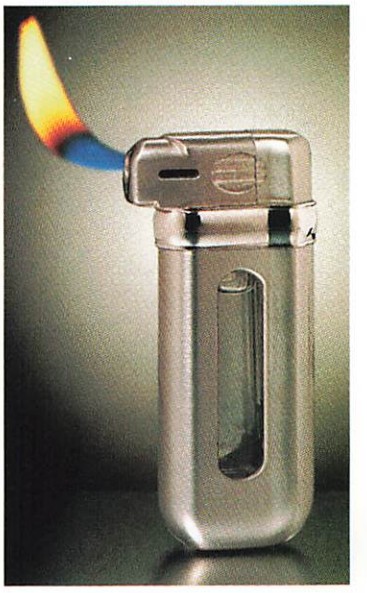
My Lady Nicotine

A famous fiction work detailing the joys of pipe smoking, the legendary "Arcadia" mixture and wife-enforced abstinence from tobacco, it is unfortunately out-of-print. However, the Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers (CORPS) has commissioned a hardcover reprint of J. M. Barrie's popular book, and has a limited number available. To order, send $14.99 plus $3 shipping to: Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers, P.O. Box 34023, Richmond, VA 23234.



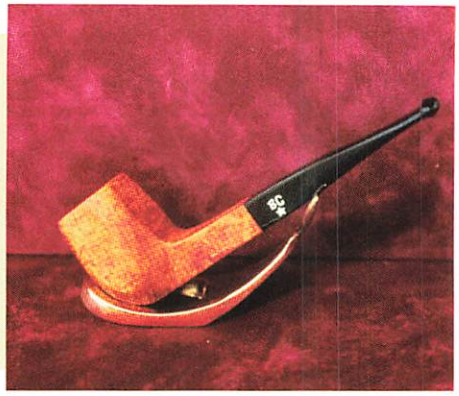
"Sherlock" Pipe Lighter

The Lighter Company offers this butane lighter with 90 degree flame for easy pipe lighting. Featuring a clear window for seeing the fuel level, you'll never be surprised by a suddenly-empty lighter. Available in tobacco shops throughout the United States, or, for additional information, contact The Lighter Company, 4112 Aurora Street, Coral Gables, FL 33146; telephone 305.443.6540; or visit *www.getlit.com*.



Butz-Choquin Pipes

[#10] French-made Butz Choquin pipes are well-known for their affordable high quality. The B.C. Concorde, left, has a suggested retail price of $65. [#18] The Manoir, right, features a satin finish, panel sides and lucite stem. Suggested retail price is $80. Available at fine tobacco shops everywhere.



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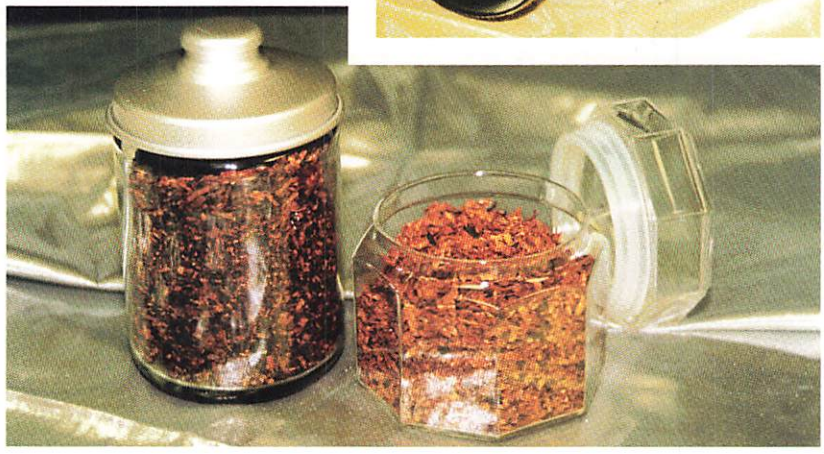
Quality and variety in tobacco accessories for discriminating smokers from Thomas Cristiano and Calebresi. These legendary pipes are of the highest quality. Also available is a wide array of pipe racks and tobacco jars. For more information, contact Cristom Inc., 6408 West Linebaugh Avenue, Suite 101, Tampa, FL 33625; call 800.886.7252 or 813.961.7595; fax 813.269.0921.

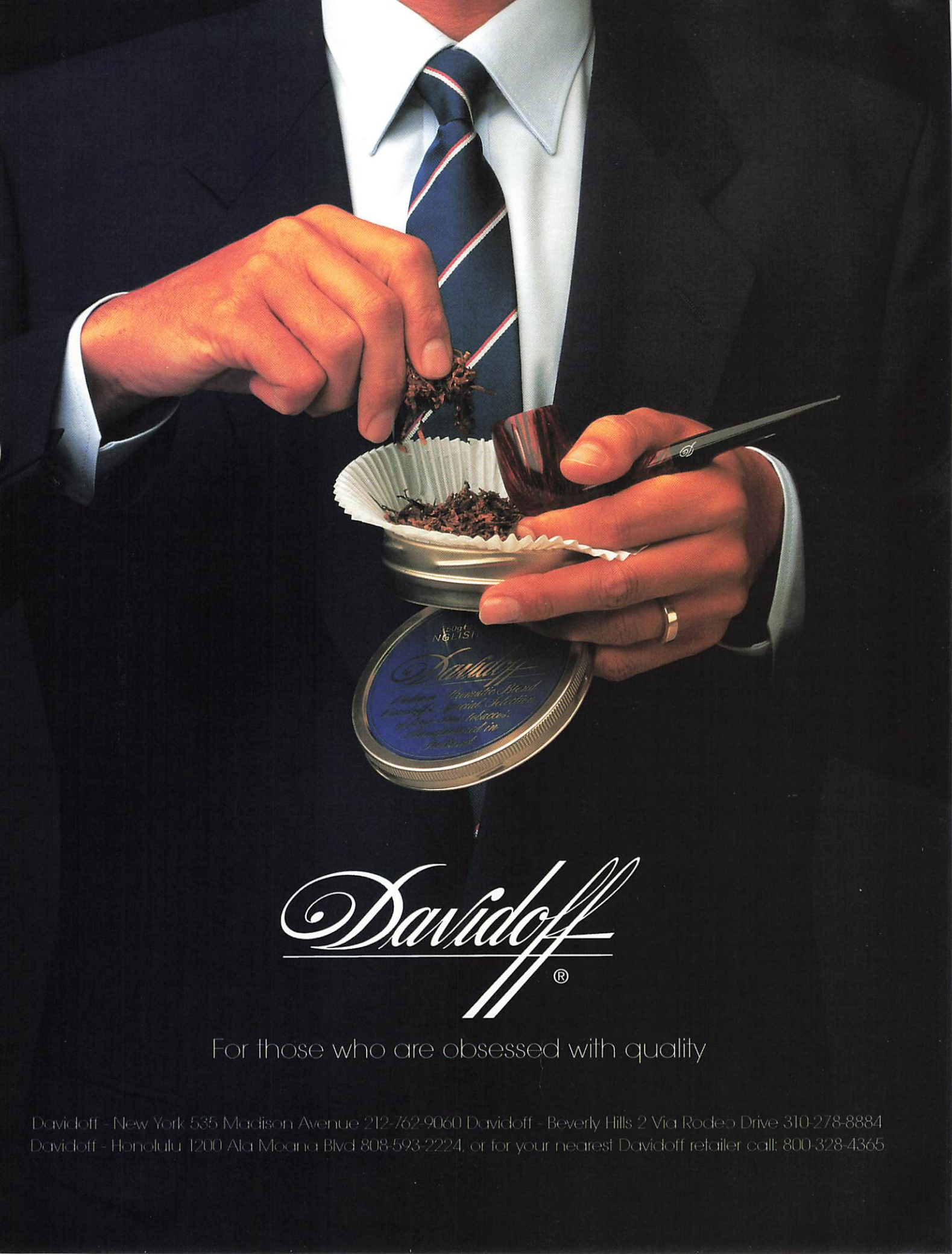
Black Frigate

Cornell & Diehl offers a Royal Navy blend for the traditional sailor living in every pipe smoker: Black Frigate. Latakia and Turkish are added to Navy Cavendish, pressed and sliced. As it states on the tin, this tobacco is "not for the faint of heart." Available at your local tobacconist, or for further information, contact Cornell & Diehl Inc., 3130 Hunters Ridge Court, Morganton, NC 28680, telephone 800.433.0080.



Buffing motors and wheels

From Mr. Paul's Pipes, these dual-shaft motors are perfect for your home pipemaking and pipe maintenance needs. These are 1/2 horsepower, ball bearing motors, running at 1,725 rpm, which is the suggested speed for pipe applications. Price: $150. Mr. Paul's also carries pipemaking kits, briar, stems, carnauba wax, buffing compounds, pipe stains and everything else you need for pipemaking projects. Contact Mr. Paul's Pipes at P.O. Box 47145, Baltimore, MD 21244-7145, or telephone or fax 410.922.4100.



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TRIAL BY FIRE

by William Serad

Reviewed this issue: Tinned blends by Dan Tobacco of Germany

As a note on reviewing new tobacco blends, I actually do have a system. Very few blends are absolute junk, although those do exist. I think they are readily identifiable (burning your face off, inducing sweeping waves of nausea, availability in drugstores, piquancy of something not quite mummified, etc.). Equally true, there are very few absolutely superlative blends, also readily identifiable. In between, there are a spectrum of blends that need to be worked at or have special treatment before being appreciated at their best. So what I do is to cycle through a series of pipes (big Ben Wades, small Petersons, straight-walled pots, small and large meerschaums, Kirstens, corncob, cherry, long and short stemmed, bent and straight), to give a blend its best shot at stardom. A few fail to please in everything, but most work in a pipe of some particular configuration or other.

My approach to blends is to think of them as types, of which I have no real preferences. I am an unbiased reviewer in that sense and would not reject all aromatics out of hand, for example. I like some aromatics, matured flakes, light to heavy English, and into the Balkan range. I like them all (pardon my fickleness), and they all have their time and place to enjoy them the most. I tend toward the English if I have any preference. My longtime fascination is with blends that are cross-breeds between aromatics and English, or blends with flavoring and condimental leaf, and there are very few of these. Restraint in both dimensions (flavors and condimental leaf) gives complexity, a desired characteristic in my estimate.

I really don't like blends that are pretentious, or aspire to be the single best, because there is no single best. As well, I don't repurchase blends that have problems with the quality of the leaf, sloppy processing, or inconsistency in flavor. I also admit that something may strike my fancy one day, and not be the right thing the next—through no fault of its own—so I wait awhile and try again. Moreover, I firmly believe that there is no disputing of tastes, so my opinion plus a nickel gives you five cents. That said, here is my opinion. (Get your own nickel).

Blue Note (aromatic)

A medium cut, mostly rubbed-out golden Virginia with some black Cavendish, this has the most remarkable aroma both in the tin and while burning. It has exotic fruit extracts and a 'breath' of bourbon vanilla topping, but smells like some extremely rich candy to me. While this might make one assume that this would be unbearably sweet, it actually has mostly the natural sweetness of the Virginia base. The fact that it burns fairly coolly also indicates an absence of straight sugar additives that turn a bowl burning at anything above the slowest smolder into a blast furnace on a stick. Aside from the very pronounced casing and room aroma, it has a rather natural taste and tends somewhat toward the bland. Altogether, an unexpectedly pleasant, fragrant smoke, perhaps suited to the all-day smoker. It smells so good that, rather than getting the usual pariah treatment pipe smokers receive, people will probably pay you to smoke this around them. Be warned: the aroma stays with the pipe.

Old Ironsides (flake)

Well, Latakia addicts, here's one for you. This is an almost completely black flake with some light flash. The bulk of this blend is straight Latakia, and from the smoky taste I might guess it is Syrian, or I might have just had sensory fatigue. Past a certain point, Latakia overwhelms other ingredients into irrelevancy, and I really can't taste much else here. Please bear in mind that I love Latakia, and think that Glade should make a Latakia air freshener. The only thing on the market that I am aware of similar to this is Cornell & Diehl's Pirate Kake, which is not quite as unrelenting. On the credits side, this is very cool and round, and I can't say I didn't enjoy it, but it's just too much for me. If you want more Latakia than this, you'll need an IV drip of it.

Midnight Ride

Billed as an exotic blend of oriental, Virginia and Perique, this is a definite high point in the series. The Oriental component is very rich, and if you are fond of Orientals, then this will delight you. The Virginias are naturally sweet, but the overall effect is not hot burning, but rather cool considering the fact that components under other circumstances could act as tinder. Perique's contribution here is one of conformity and synergy, and adds its fruitiness gently as an integrated team member. This leads me to believe the proportion of Perique is 25 percent or less, given its conformity with the Oriental. If you look at the blend, you might think that it constituted much more. The tin aroma is charmingly musty, and repulsive to small children and wives. I have noticed an inverse relationship between how much I will enjoy a blend and the reaction of non-pipe-smokers to tin and smoking aroma, and this upholds my model. This is really quite good to me, and the big hit in the series with scenes of Revolutionary War moments on the tins. Perique fans, rejoice! ▶

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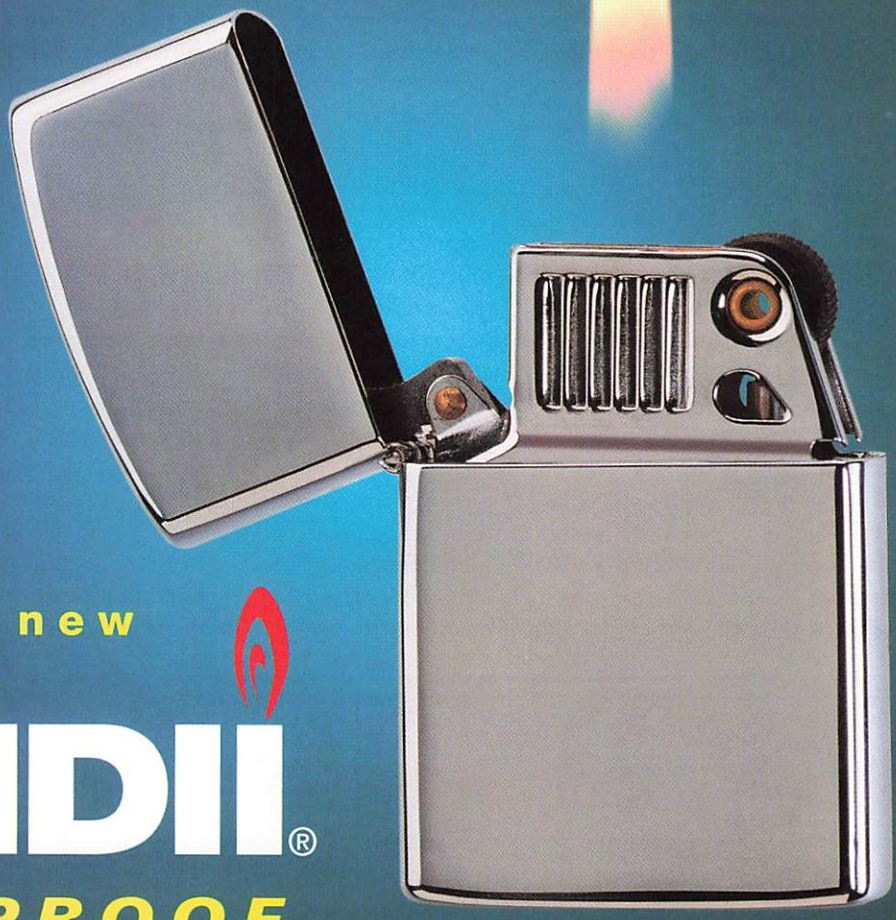

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Independence

This is a partially rubbed-out flake, probably Virginia. It is mainly dark brown, and cased with something that reminds me of Mixture 79. I don't find this appealing, but it is cool and rather sweet, if those are appealing attributes to you. The room aroma must resemble that of the tin, and this is certainly something I would not personally pursue, but there is no disputing of tastes, so it will appeal to some.

Liberty

A fully rubbed-out mixture of "bright and sweet premium Virginia grades," this smells and tastes like floral soap to me. I really find this quite distasteful, and an assault on the nature of the leaf. It is predominantly brown with some blond and some black, and I can't imagine what the sauce on it is. I really don't care what flavors are added, unlike certain purists, but I want the result to taste like tobacco. Other than the fact that this is a sooty little blend, it no longer resembles tobacco to me, or anything that should be burned in a pipe, and certainly not in my pipe.

London Blend #250 (aromatic flake)

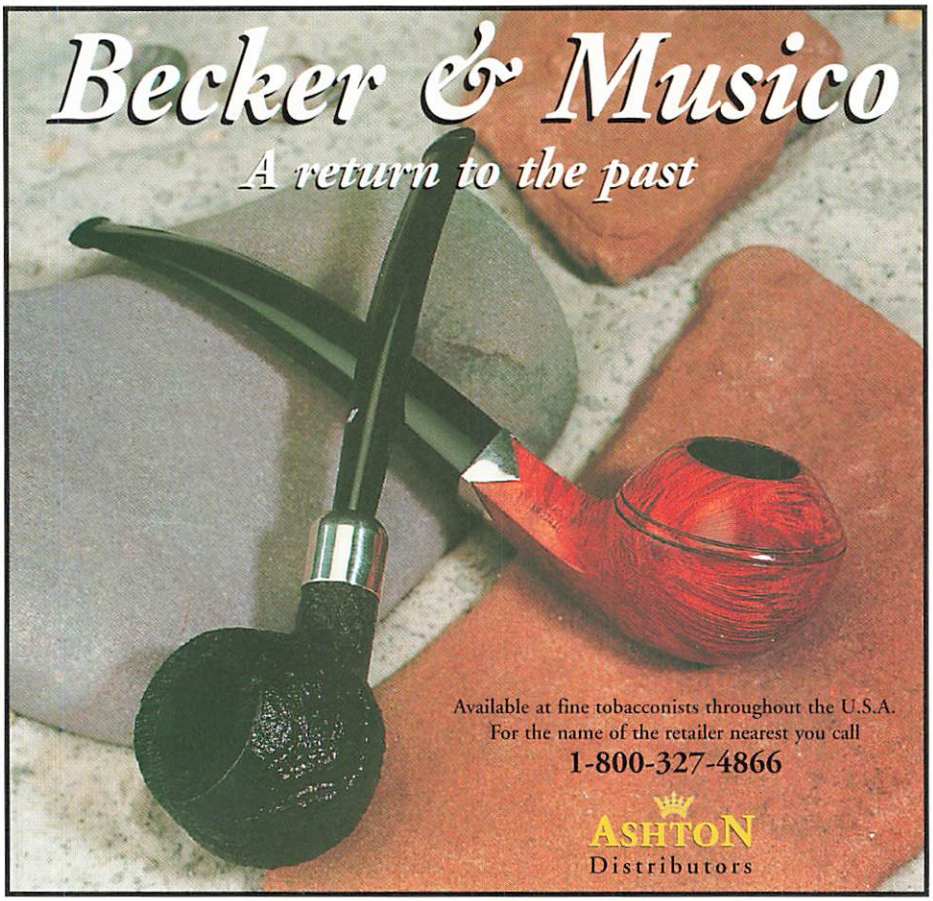
This is a rather unusual flake, dark reddish brown, with a delightful aroma in the tin. It is cased with malt and a natural plum extract, and contains 10 percent Latakia and a bit of Perique. The tin aroma was so appealing and delicate, I expected something similar while burning, but was surprised while smoking it. It has much more of a dark Virginia tone, and while the condimental leaf is not dominant in percentage or effect, it has a presence and lends to the blend's secret, dark side, like an inner note of melancholy. I didn't particularly like it the first time, but for the next bowl I tried a different puffing tempo, slower and more contemplative, and the complexity of the blend emerged. This is definitely not for agitated puffing (which wouldn't be in character for a pipe man anyway), so don't try it in urban high-traffic areas. It is medium cool, so a relaxed smoke is indicated. I think this deserves experimenting with different bowl shapes and sizes to optimize the results, because there are hidden depths here worth plumbing.

Treasures of Ireland Limerick (flake)

This is a beautiful, deep mahogany flake with no noticeable stems containing Virginias from "sun-rich regions" and 5 percent Perique. It is naturally sweet, and while I might prefer a bit more Perique, the balance here in practice is excellent. It hits the exact spot between sweetness (too much sugar makes a hot burn) and coolness. It is extremely rich, and burns very slowly to a gray ash. The character is deep and complex, and thoroughly enjoyable. This is absolutely first-rate, and I will definitely buy it again.

London Blend #1000 (English)

I had a *déjà vu* experience opening the tin of this wonderful blend. The first blast of richness coming from the tin reminded me of opening Rattray's a quarter century ago (when I had money in college, I bought Rattray's; not often enough). What glorious nostalgia! I sat with my nose in the tin for quite a while before ever lighting up. This is a very heavy English with loads of Latakia, and is billed as full strength "after dinner" blend. I won't argue with that, but I will say that in my youth, strength referred to nicotine content and not Latakia content. Certain Virginia flakes and Perique blends were full in those days, so I would characterize this more as rich, opulent and intoxicating. Aside from the abundant Latakia, it has Izmir (a light, sweet taste, aromatic, small leaves, low nicotine) and Zimbabwean Virginia. It is perfectly balanced despite all the operatic flavors and aromas, and the Latakia doesn't overwhelm. It is cool and the complexity is revealed as the flavors and aroma metamorphose throughout the bowl. It is superlative. ▶



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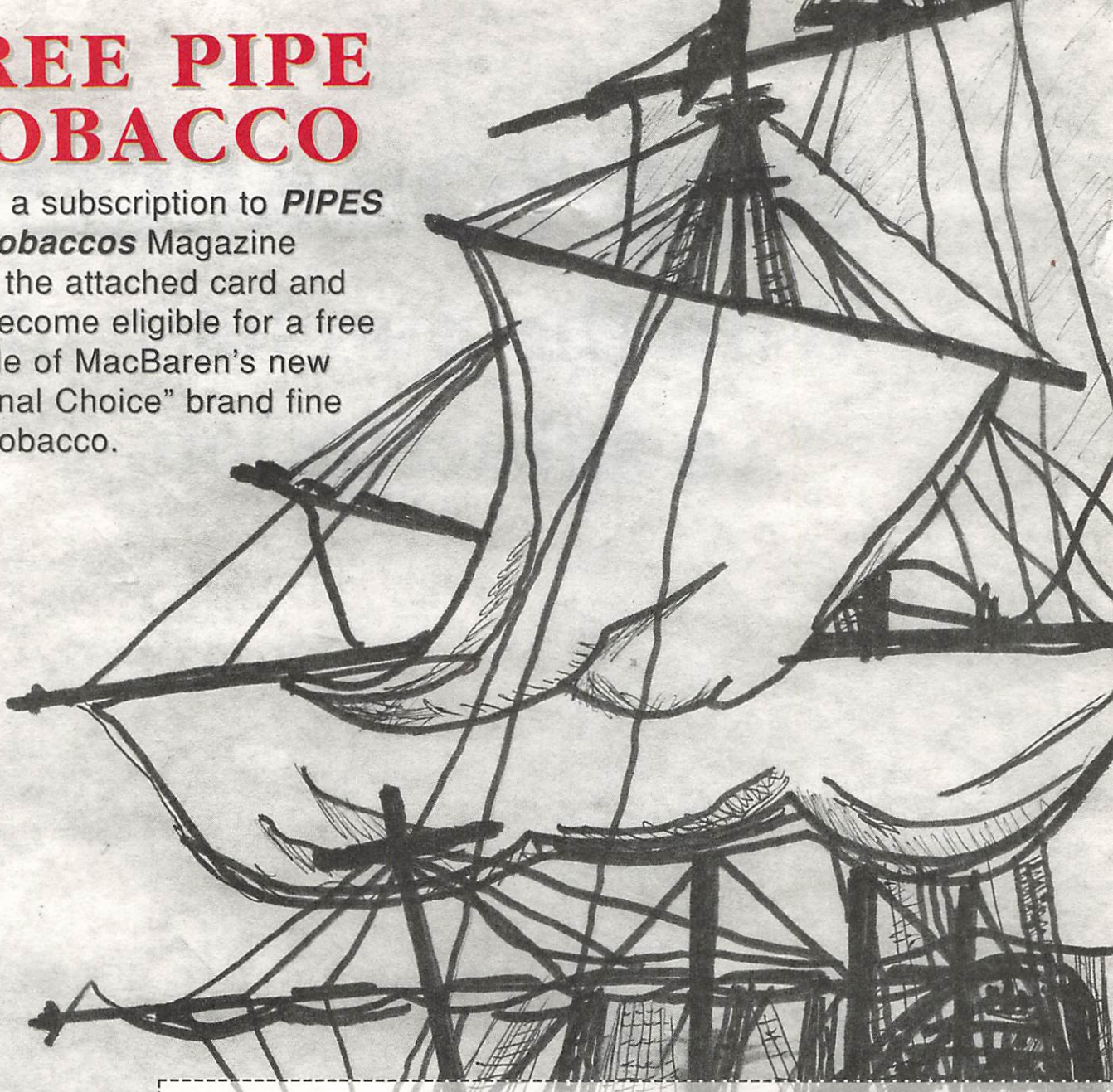

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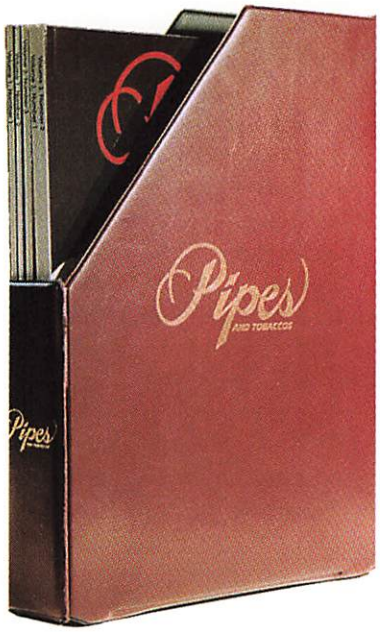

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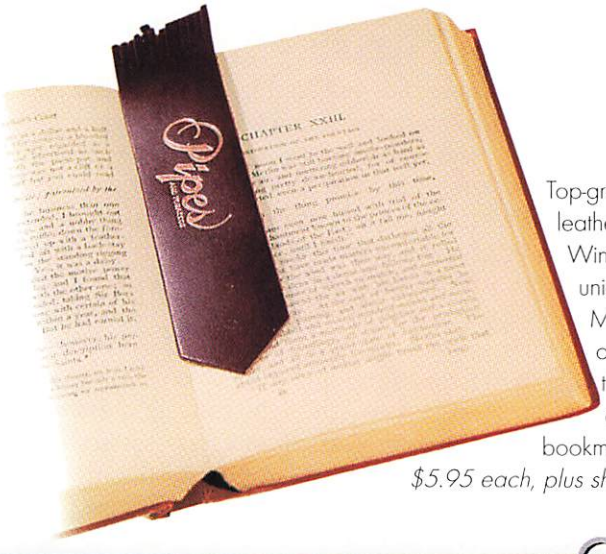

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Bill Bailey's Best Blend (English)
This is a very mild English blend, lightly sweet. It seems to be cased to me, but I can't identify the agent. The condimental component tastes so light that this is a sort of augmented Virginia blend (brown with some mostly rubbed-out flake), though one can see the Latakia and smell the Orientals in the tin. The overall visual effect is quite dark. Because it is so unformidable in the bowl, it would be an excellent first pipe of the day. Don't compare it to Dunhill's Early Morning Pipe, though, because the Orientals are so much lighter in effect. Toward the end of the bowl, the taste fades somewhat. There is not a single thing unpleasant or objectionable about the blend, and it might easily become a smoker's regular. Another characteristic it shares with certain Virginias is that "Encore!" note from the palate about an hour after a bowl when you want another of the same. To be honest, I think the next one is Bill's best, but I leave that to the gentle reader.

Bill Bailey's Balkan Blend (Balkan)
This is a Balkan from the past. It is full of Orientals and Latakia (40 percent), and is very dark in color and fine cut. It has Virginias which are augmented with 10 percent dark-fired Kentucky. This is a blender's technique I have seen before to add heft to Virginias that of themselves have character but not enough weighty presence, so the Burley puts in some ballast without adding its own character to the blend. It also has some Perique. This is an opulent and sonorous blend, full of flavor from start to finish. For those who want big, continuous flavor, this is a great blend. I found this to be thoroughly enjoyable, but the thought occurred that this might be inappropriate for summer puffing (I am trying it midwinter).

Gordon Pym (English)
This is a classic of its sort. It has nothing in it that is vastly different, yet the combination is just right and would bear no adjustments. There are certain blends that are simply great examples of their type and can't be reasonably improved by original manufacturer alteration. They might be carried further down an evolutionary line emphasizing particular characteristics, but the blend itself sits at a pinnacle as a touchstone, an exemplar. My book of examples would include things like the original Rattray's Black Mallory, John Cotton's Smyrna, Preston's Presbyterian, Dunhill's 965, Erlich's DPE, Tint's Burlington Arcade, Murray's Erinmore Flake, or in a more recent vein, Cornell & Diehl's Plantation Evening, McClelland's Dark Star, or a host of others which are to me the best of their sort, whatever that sort may be. Similarly, this blend, like Baby Bear's porridge, is just right. It contains golden Virginia, Maryland, dark-fired Virginia, sumptuous orientals, and a delicate tinge of Syrian Latakia. Please note that the only blend I know of available in the USA made with Syrian Latakia rather than Cyprian is Ashton's Celebrated Sovereign. This blend is short cut, packs easily as a result, and is very cool. Pym is balanced like Carl Walenda ("Life is on the wire. All the rest is waiting around.") and is light, flavorful, and good all the way down the bowl. I bought this delightful blend myself prior to being asked to review it, and was happy to share my two cents. Wonderful!

Torben Dansk #3 – Red Virginia Superb (English)
I thought the "superb" epithet to be pretentious, but perhaps it is accurate. One might have thought from the name that this blend was a flake or rubbed-out form of red Virginia à la McCranie or McClelland, but this is an English with a significant proportion of fermented red and brown Virginia. The cut is very fine and somewhat short with an absence of stems and the like, and some of the red is not fully rubbed out. It is very rich, but the sweetness of the Virginia is always present. It has a good Oriental component, but overall it is extremely dark, running from deep mahogany and brown to black. It burns to a pale ash. This is really quite delicious, and despite its weight, I enjoyed it at any time of the day.

Tordenskjold Virginia Slices (flake)
This is a typical Danish style product, tending toward the sweet and light. It is golden Virginia of a beautiful hue, and it is supposed to have some Louisiana Perique which I can't readily detect. I noticed the faint aroma of honey when I opened the tin, the same as when I open a tin of Mac Baren's. The main difference is that Mac Barens tends toward the hot in burning characteristics (with quick puffing, I can simulate a fission reaction with the control rods out) and this is quite cool. It is an excellent grade of Virginia and well processed with no visible stems and a somewhat dry composition. It was fragrant in the way tobacco should be, not from additives, and in this case, not even from Orientals or Latakia. It displayed those singing coloratura high notes that one expects from the very best golden Virginias. This type of flake is not my usual cup of tea, but it has successfully expanded my horizon.

Holly's Non Plus Ultra (aromatic)
I don't like this sort of blend at all, so bear that in mind as I describe it. The name means nothing more beyond, and I would say that adequately characterizes it. It is an abuse of leaf to have such strident and overbearing additives that one can't taste the tobacco anymore. It is a middling brown, mostly rubbed-out Virginia blend with little color variation. There is a note of rum I thought I noticed. I would say that this is flowery rather than fruity, and quite sweet in an excessive way, though not as sweet as Borkum Riff (I am not saying that Borkum Riff resembles this in any way, and am just using it as a reference point for sweetness). The room aroma must be remarkable, with no resemblance to smoke. It must be more like a bakery making Viennese vein cloggers vented through a florist handling a rather large

funeral. It is not hot, but it is rather warm. Be warned: The aroma stays with the pipe.

Hamborger Veermaster (flake) This is a classic English-style Virginia flake. It is light brown, has a nice tobacco-y aroma in the tin with a very moist texture to the flake, but contains a noticeable number of veins. Even so, it is very tasty, fairly cool, and provides a nice smoke with natural sweetness and a kindly presence in the bowl. It is unremarkable in any particular attribute, but I enjoyed it.

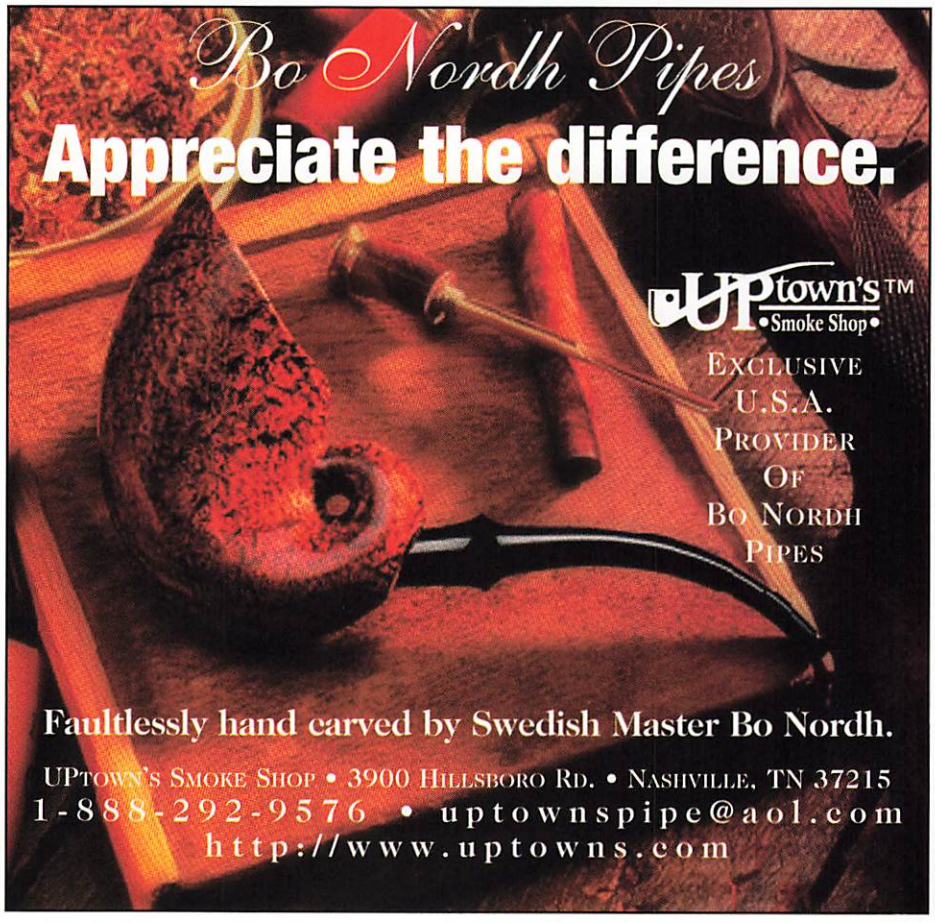
Sweet Vanilla Honeydew (aromatic) I was all set not to like this, but was thwarted by the quality of the leaf. It is a full rubbed-out golden Virginia, pale to light brown, with no additional condimental leaf. At first glance (and, I freely admit, from the name), one might expect something like a drugstore t'baccy with artificial flavors and gobs of propylene glycol, making up those brown, jellied sorts of pipe cloggers that people around you love, that taste like nothing and that make your pipes stink. This is first-quality Virginia, and the flavoring is pleasing to the smoker as well as the bystander. It is light, sweet and cool, and very pleasant. If you like all or mostly Virginia blends with flavoring, like Cornell & Diehl's Danish Pastry or particular McClelland's bulk blends, this would appeal to you. Not something I would regularly pursue, but it is a nice change of pace.

Sam Malloy's #4 Extra Stout (aromatic) This blend is medium to pale brown, with a lesser amount of black leaf. It contains Kentucky Black Cavendish, aromatic Burley, and Latakia, and is topped with an Irish flavor. Mentioned are Irish and English beers, but I don't get that from the tin or smoking aroma. I think I would have liked this, had it not been for the flavorings, which in this case overwhelm rather than enhance the ingredients. All I can taste or smell are the flavorings, so strident that I can't even notice the Latakia component. Maybe if the blender lightened up on the flavoring hit, or did away with it altogether, I would like this. As it stands, I don't. I will say that I admire any blender attempting to combine flavorings with traditional condimental leaf, though the outcome here is disagreeable to my palate.

The Malthouse Founder's Reserve (aromatic) This is a partially rubbed-out Virginia flake, light to dark brown, that has been aged in malt whiskey for 12 weeks. It has a lovely aroma in the tin and while smoking, and is quite sweet. It is beyond the sweetness of the leaf, in fact, and is clearly a result of the casing. It burns to a pale gray ash. Because of the casing, it can be sharp on the tongue, especially while lighting, but a level head can restrain aggressive puffing and get the most from the smoke. If you like straight Virginias and want an augmented blend as a change of pace, this might be for you. If you are currently involved with ooky, goop-laden aromatics, this would be a step in the direction of naturals (please take it). I don't think I could become a consistent aficionado of this, but it has its charms. *P&T*

About the author

I was born in 1954, back when smoking generally was more acceptable, and certainly when pipe smokers were plentiful. Both of my grandfathers and one great-grandfather were pipe smokers, so I come by it naturally. In fact, my maternal grandfather was a model in a Half and Half ad. While I attended the University of Pennsylvania (as did Patty & Craig Tarler of Cornell & Diehl and Steve Masticola of the Pipes Web page), everybody was smoking something. Constrained by a desire for legality, as well as a loathing for cigarettes and ci-gars, pipes seemed most natural. My continuing fascination with Sherlockiana induced me to purchase a calabash. The experience was so enjoyable and the pipe such a problem, I soon purchased a normal briar. Those were the beginnings. –



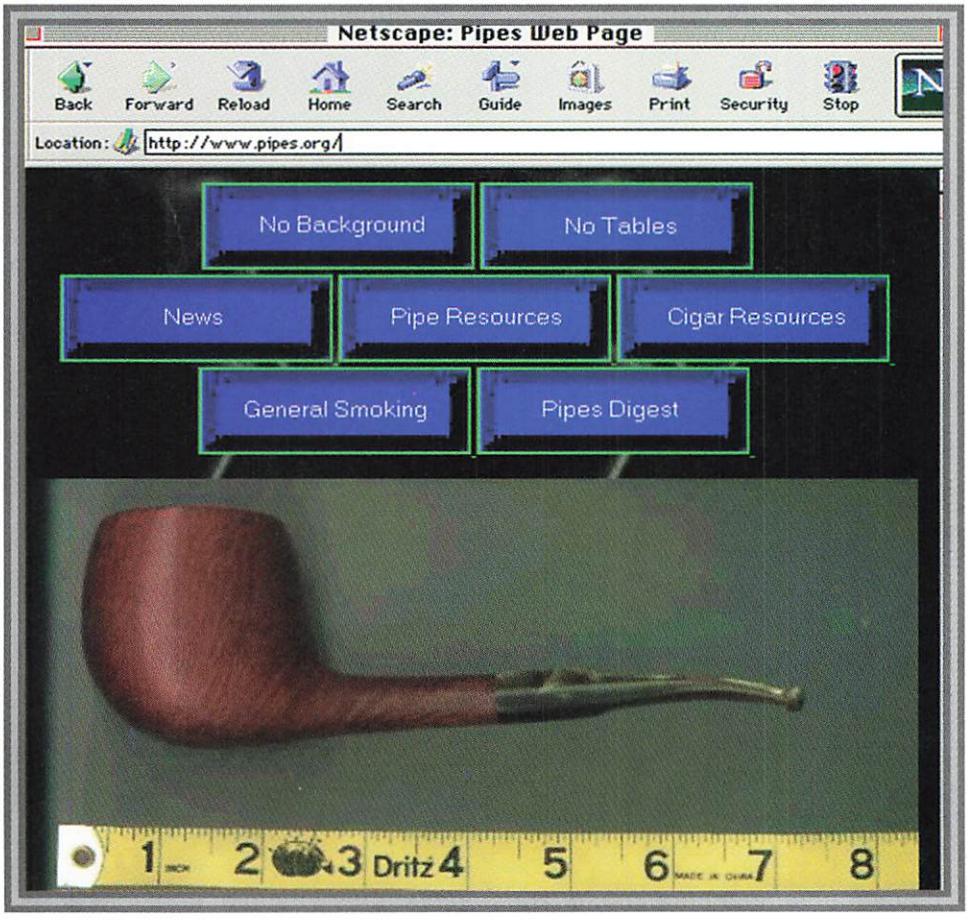
Online Pipe Smoking

A how and why introduction to the Internet for those of us who have not yet joined the computer revolution but would like to see what we are missing as it relates to pipes.

by Steve Beaty

The Internet. It's grabbing headlines, and it's huge. It's reported to be growing at 30 percent a month and is used regularly by 55 million Americans. The Internet will do $500 million worth of business this year, and a billion dollars around the turn of the millennium.

Why has this rather esoteric corner of computing become so hot so fast? There are a number of contributing factors. First and foremost, with the advent of the World Wide Web (WWW), the Internet has become easily accessible to almost everyone. The Web makes it easy to access a large number of people and a large amount of information easily and at low cost. From a business viewpoint, it provides manufacturers and retailers close contact with their customers, whether those customers are next door or in a different country, and it allows for secure financial transactions to be performed electronically and instantly.

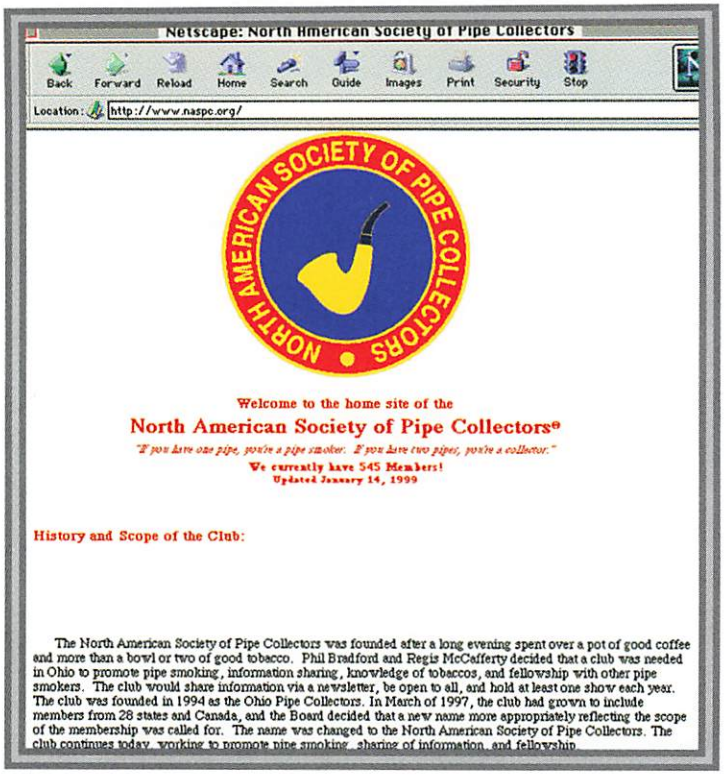


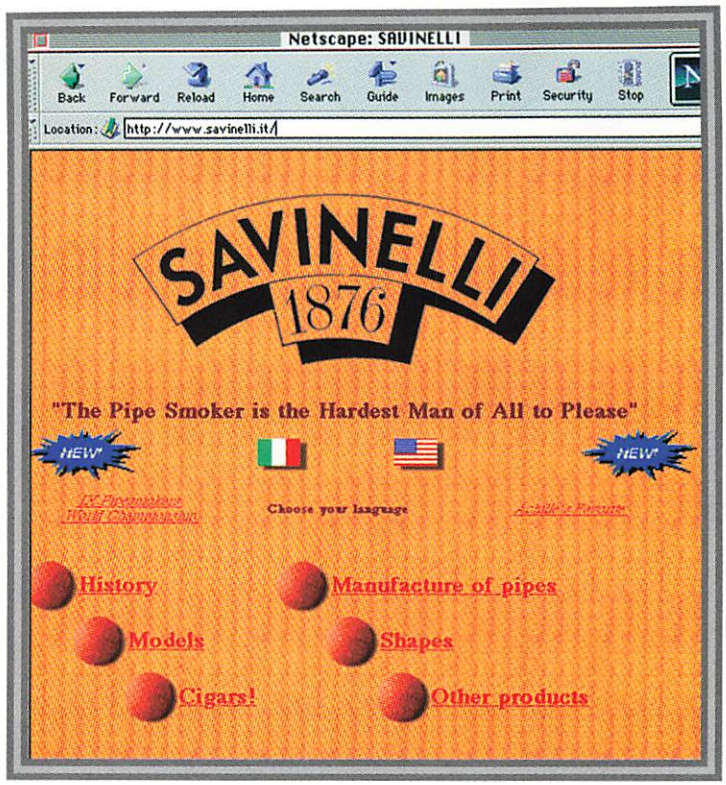
There are many ways to map the Internet (e.g.: chronologically, by amount of traffic, etc.) but let's look at it as a medium for communication. As such, it has methods similar to the existing media, as well as a few unique to itself.

When communication takes place between people, either one or many people can contribute to producing the information communicated, and either one or many can consume it. The simplest form of communication is from one person to another, called one-to-one communication, an example being writing a letter to a friend. There is a corresponding technique called "e-mail," standing for electronic mail, that allows two people to communicate on the Internet.

An Internet e-mail address usually has the form of a person's name, or a

The most comprehensive pipe smoking site on the WWW is the Pipes Web page, with information on pipes, smoking and tobacco as well as hundreds of links to personal and company sites of interest to pipe smokers.


Netscape: North American Society of Pipe Collectors
Back
Forward
Reload
Home
Search
Guide
Images
Print
Security
Stop
Location: http://www.naspc.org/
NORTH AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PIPE COLLECTORS
Welcome to the home site of the
North American Society of Pipe Collectors®
"If you have one pipe, you're a pipe smoker. If you have two pipes, you're a collector."
We currently have 545 Members!
Updated January 14, 1999
History and Scope of the Club:
The North American Society of Pipe Collectors was founded after a long evening spent over a pot of good coffee and more than a bowl or two of good tobacco. Phil Bradford and Regis McCafferty decided that a club was needed in Ohio to promote pipe smoking, information sharing, knowledge of tobaccos, and fellowship with other pipe smokers. The club would share information via a newsletter, be open to all, and hold at least one show each year. The club was founded in 1994 as the Ohio Pipe Collectors. In March of 1997, the club had grown to include members from 28 states and Canada, and the Board decided that a new name more appropriately reflecting the scope of the membership was called for. The name was changed to the North American Society of Pipe Collectors. The club continues today, working to promote pipe smoking, sharing of information, and fellowship



Many pipe clubs, such as the NASPC, left, maintain Web sites to promote membership, disseminate interesting information and to report on their meetings and shows. Many distributors and manufacturers also have sites. The Savinelli site provides a history of the company as well as an informative list of shapes and models.

nickname they like to go by on the Net, an '@' character, and the name of a computer where they receive their e-mail. Addressing e-mail is very similar to addressing an envelope, with *beaty@pipes.org* being one of the e-mail addresses of this author. Pipes.org is the name of a computer that will accept e-mail for me.

E-mail also allows for one-to-many communication via what are known as e-mailing lists. These lists accept e-mail from many people and then redistribute it to any number of people who have "subscribed" to the list. Some of these lists are moderated, meaning someone must approve each message submitted before it is broadcast to the list as a whole. This is similar to the "letters to the editor" section in magazines and newspapers.

There are also unmoderated e-mailing lists where everybody sees everything submitted. The Pipes Digest is probably the oldest and best-known e-mailing list for pipe smokers. Steve Masticola moderates this, and creates a digest of the e-mail received every several weeks. Contact him at *masticol@pipes.org* to join in the fun.

Next up are the newsgroups (sometimes called the Usenet for historical reasons). In this form of communication, people "post" articles to various newsgroups (sometimes called "bulletin boards") that anyone can read. This is another one-to-many method of communication. The newsgroups are organized into interest areas, and there are usually about 5,000 available. The one that dominates the online pipe-smoking world is *alt.smokers.pipes* (known affectionately as ASP) with 300 to 500 articles posted per day. People post questions, answers, opinions and general observations about life. As with most newsgroups, ASP is a free-for-all (no one moderates the discussion that takes place) so it is best read with a healthy sense of humor. ASP allows for many-to-many communication when people "follow-up" to someone's article, creating a "thread" of articles.

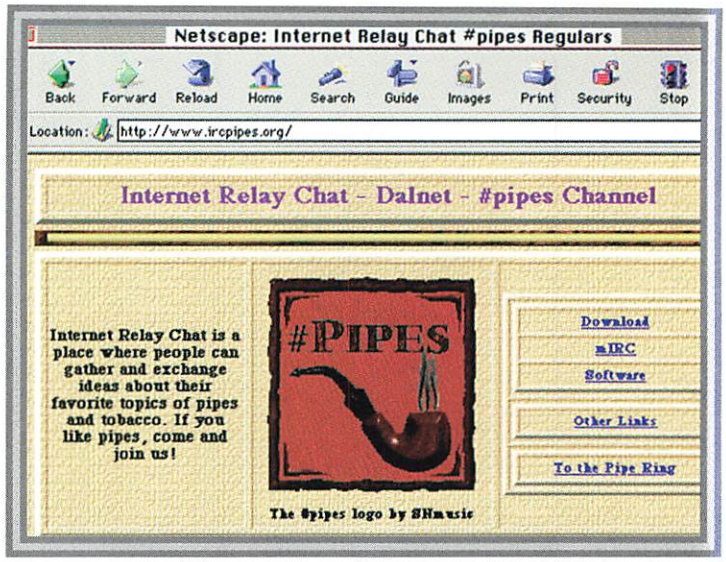
Now let's talk about the Web. The World Wide Web was developed as a method to disperse a lot of information to a lot of people easily, and it has certainly lived up to this. The Web is made up of "pages," each having an address that is similar to an e-mail address. Each page can contain text, pictures, sounds, movies; the list goes on and on. An important feature is that pages may contain "pointers" or "links" to other pages allowing easy (one mouse click) access to other pages. This gives pages the ability to contain "hypertext," the ability to point to other pages that the author considers relevant or interesting.

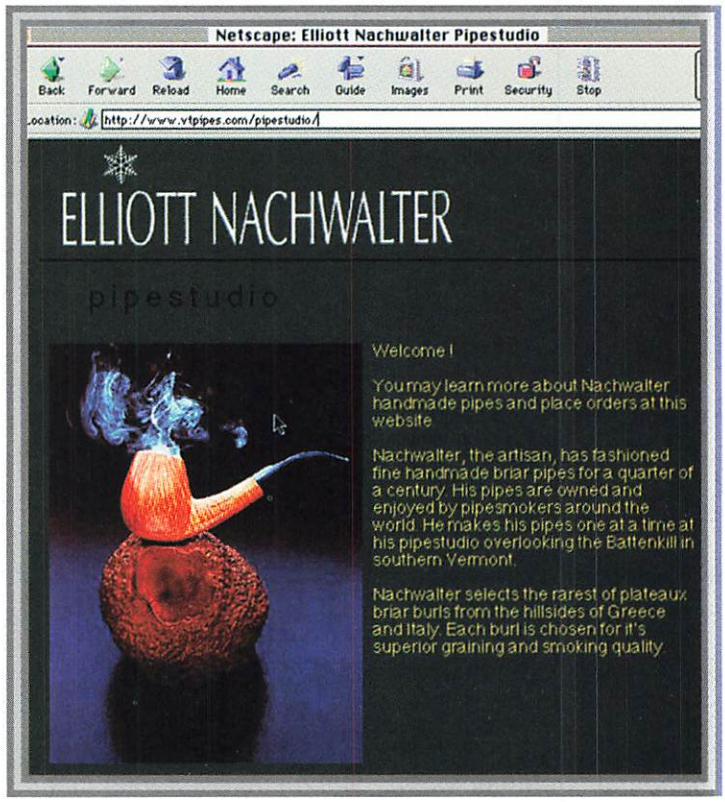
These links are usually displayed using different colors or underlining on the computer screen. With this ability, you no longer need to know on which computer information resides because the linking mechanism points to the source, whether on the same computer or on one on a different continent.

The Web has taken publishing to the next level, effectively giving everyone his or her own inexpensive printing press, a one-to-many method of communication. People now spend lots of time creating their "home pages" to express who they are.

Giving everyone his own printing press creates both a lot of interesting reading and a lot of trash. Among the Web pages of interest to pipe smokers, the page at the address *http://www.pipes.org* has been around the longest and strives to have links to as many other sites as possible. It is interesting to note that here "oldest" means five years old, showing how young this medium still is.

Another major benefit of the Web is the ease of searching for information. ▶


Netscape: Internet Relay Chat #pipes Regulars
Back Forward Reload Home Search Guide Images Print Security Stop
Location: http://www.ircpipes.org/
Internet Relay Chat - Dalnet - #pipes Channel
Internet Relay Chat is a place where people can gather and exchange ideas about their favorite topics of pipes and tobacco. If you like pipes, come and join us!
#PIPES
The #pipes logo by SHmusic
Download
mIRC
Software
Other Links
To the Pipe Ring


Netscape: Elliott Nachwalter Pipestudio
Back Forward Reload Home Search Guide Images Print Security Stop
Location: http://www.vtpipes.com/pipestudio/
ELLIOTT NACHWALTER
pipestudio
Welcome !
You may learn more about Nachwalter handmade pipes and place orders at this website.
Nachwalter, the artisan, has fashioned fine handmade briar pipes for a quarter of a century. His pipes are owned and enjoyed by pipesmokers around the world. He makes his pipes one at a time at his pipestudio overlooking the Battenkill in southern Vermont.
Nachwalter selects the rarest of plateaux briar burls from the hillsides of Greece and Italy. Each burl is chosen for it's superior graining and smoking quality.

If you're looking for supplies to enter the P&T *pipecarving contest, sites such as Mr. Paul's, above, can help you find the right tools and materials. The IRC pipes page, top right, will show you how to get started with real-time online conversations with other pipe smokers. If you'd like a closer view of what particular pipemakers are doing, Web pages such as Elliott Nachwalter's, right, are a great resource.*

There are sites that you can visit to search through data collected from a huge number of pages, *http://www.yahoo.com*, *http://www.excite.com*, and *http://www.infoseek.com* being but three examples.

Another many-to-many form of communication is the "Internet Relay Chat," or IRC. Up to this point, we've been discussing "off-line" communication, that is communication where the sender and receiver are not talking directly to each other. The sender creates the information, be it an e-mail message, news article or Web page, and the receiver can look at it any time. But it is also possible to communicate when both are connected to the Internet at the same time. This method is similar to telephone conference calls. The IRC is a many-to-many "online" form of communication where any number of people can join a "chat room" on a specific subject and "talk" to the others in that chat room by typing on their computers. There is a room set aside specifically for pipe smokers; there is a Web page at *www.ircpipes.org/* that provides instructions on how to join.

The Internet is a new, somewhat "unnatural," way for humans to communicate. The Net doesn't allow for the "extra" information we subconsciously depend upon in face-to-face communication, such as voice intonation, facial expressions, and gestures. We are also limited by the speed at which we can type. But we humans are an adaptable bunch by and large, and there have been a number of conventions and shortcuts developed to help with these difficulties. First, there are the important "emoticons" used for facial expressions. The "smilies" are the most important of these, with the happy face :-) and sad face :-(being used to show these two emotions. Turn this page 90 degrees clockwise to see the eyes, nose and mouth. In order to reduce the time spent typing, a large number of Three Letter Acronyms (TLAs, itself a TLA) have been created. These are usually the first letter of some familiar phrase, and are not always three letters. Some common examples include By The Way (BTW), In My Humble Opinion (IMHO), Rolling On The Floor Laughing (ROTFL), On The Other Hand (OTOH), For What Its Worth (FWIW), Your Mileage May Vary (YMMV), and Frequently Asked Ques-

tions (FAQ). In many of the newsgroups, there are questions from "newbies" that appear again and again. Often, someone has taken it upon him or herself to gather these questions, provide answers, and make this document available. These can be very useful for those starting out, and ASP has a nicely done one.

How can you gain access to all this wonderful information? In the past, you needed separate software for each of the communication methods: an e-mail package, a newsreader, etc. These days, most Web browsers have all of these capabilities built in and is therefore the only software package needed. The two major players in the browser business these days are Microsoft and Netscape; both produce very nice and capable browsers.

Given this, how do you go about gaining access to a browser? The easiest and least expensive way probably is to visit your public library. Many are Internet connected and allow free access. If you become very interested, having Internet access at home becomes very desirable.

If you don't need the capabilities of a stand-alone computer, WebTV may be the easiest route. A Web adapter (similar to a cable TV box) attaches to your TV and phone line; the cost of these is about $250, with a monthly charge of about $20 for access.

If you would like the capabilities (and associated complexities) of a computer, there are currently two major competitors in the personal computer (PC) world: Apple computers and those running Microsoft Windows. Both are designed to work well with the Internet. As with everything related to computers, bigger and faster is better, and the rate at which bigger and faster becomes less and less expensive is remarkable. New computers are inexpensive, and used computers can be downright cheap for what you receive.

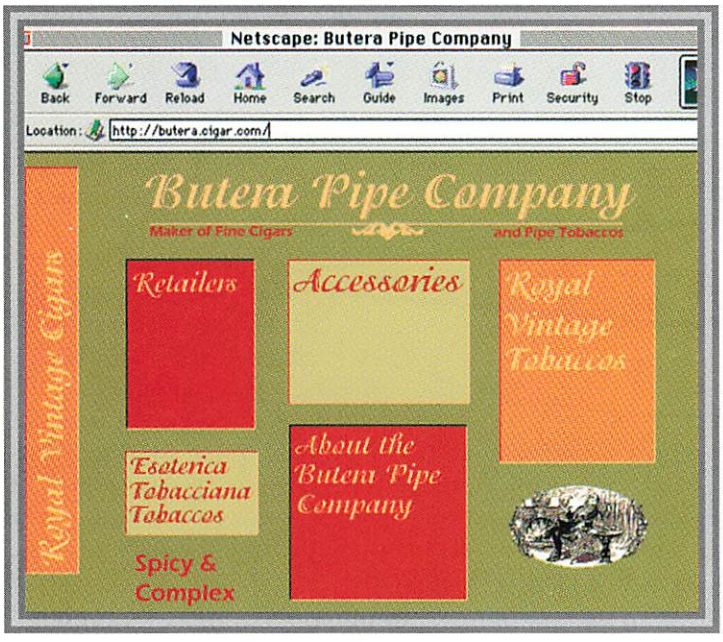
Computers running Microsoft Windows are made by a lot of manufacturers. Any with a Pentium (586 or 686) processor, 32 megabytes of RAM, more than a gigabyte of hard disk space, and a 56k modem will be more than adequate and costs around $1,500 at discount electronics stores. Don't be too concerned about all the "megahertz" and "gigabyte" jargon; buy from a reputable place that has quality computers for reasonable prices. Only one company manufactures Apple computers: Apple. That certainly removes the worry over whom to buy from.

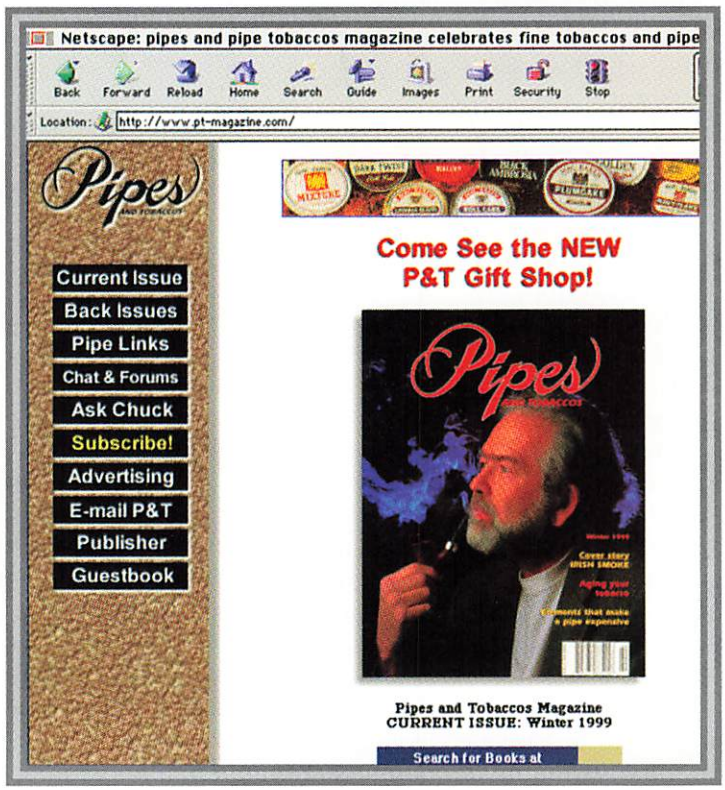
Once you have a computer and modem, you need two more things. First is a browser, and virtually every computer is shipped with one these days. Second, you need to arrange for Internet access.

There are a lot of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to choose from. On a national basis, America On-Line (AOL) and CompuServe probably have the largest user community. Both of these are designed to be easy to set up and use and both have sections dedicated to pipe smoking. Most of the long-distance phone companies are offering Internet access. AT&T Worldnet is an example.

Local ISPs abound also; a quick trip to the yellow pages will probably list quite a few. All ISPs will give you a disk or CD-ROM containing all the software you will need to connect and "surf" the Internet. Load the software, have your modem make a local phone call and you're off and running. Costs usually start in the $20-a-month range, with some ISPs offering an unlimited amount of connect time for a set rate and some that start charging more if you exceed a certain number of minutes.

This gentle introduction to the Internet was intended to answer the hows and whys pipe smokers can participate in this global community. For the first time in history, we can easily and rapidly communicate with those all over the globe who share our passion for pipes. We are brought together, not because of geography, but because of a shared interest. For me, this leads to a fascinating juxtaposition between the very simple art of pipe smoking (wood, meerschaum or clay, an herb and fire), and the very complex science of computers. *P&T*





Distributors' sites, such as the Butera Web page, provide comprehensive lists of products as well as the names and locations of retailers that stock them. The Pipes and tobaccos *site offers sample articles, subscription information and links to other sites of interest.*

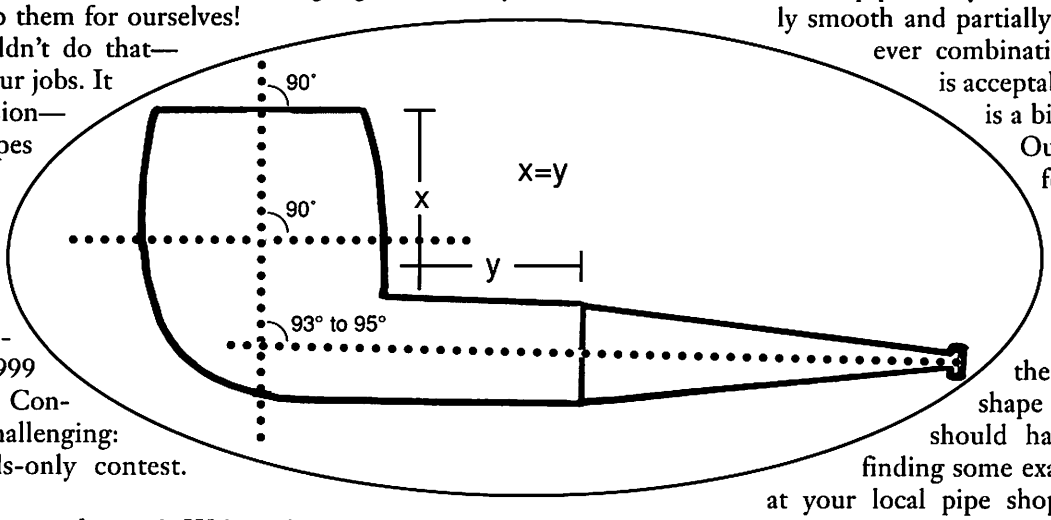
P&T Pipe Carving Contest, 1999

Our last carving contest was a terrific success, with more than 120 entries—among them some truly fabulous pipes. We were frankly surprised that so many home hobbyists, many making and entering their first pipe ever, were able to render the stunning quality that came into our offices. The hardest part, for us, was when it was all over and we had to send the pipes back to their makers. We wanted to keep them for ourselves! Of course we couldn't do that—not and still keep our jobs. It was a difficult decision—some of those pipes were worth a job.

But given the exceptional quality of the pipes from our last contest, we have decided to make the 1999 *P&T* Pipe Carving Contest a little more challenging: This is a billiards-only contest. *Straight billiards.*

You think that sounds easy? Wait till you try making one. Most professional pipemakers will tell you that the billiard is the hardest shape to carve properly. The shape is unforgiving toward slips of the sanding disk and flaws in the briar alike.

The majority of pipes arriving here for the last contest were freehands. The advantage to freehands is that when a big flaw in the briar appears, you can sand or carve it out and change the shape of the pipe as you go. Its flowing curves can be shifted and molded until a holistic appeal shapes itself and you feel it is right. If your dog gets hold of it, you can use those teeth marks to stylistic advantage. If when you are grinding you suddenly remember your taxes are due and you involuntarily take a gigantic gouge out of it, you can still fix that pipe.



But with a classic shape, such as the billiard, you must coax the briar into a predetermined form. It is more difficult to maintain fine graining with a classic shape. You can follow the grain with freehands, highlighting excellent grain with the shape of the pipe. When you carve a billiard, though, you must first remain true to the shape. So choose carefully what part of the briar block you will carve your pipe from if you wish to try for the best grain.

However, suppose you come up with a perfectly shaped billiard, but there are minor flaws or uninteresting grain patterns. Do you have to start over?

No, because for this contest we are accepting smooth, rusticated or sandblasted pipes. Or you can have it partially smooth and partially carved. Whatever combination you choose is acceptable, as long as it is a billiard.

Our last contest featured only smooth pipes. Now you can try some interesting textures. Billiards are the most popular shape made, so you should have no trouble finding some examples to study at your local pipe shop. We are not going to get into angle measurements and perfect geometry in our judging of these pipes, so you won't have to worry about complex angle calculations or curve ratios.

However, we will be judging according to the following inexact definition of a billiard:

1) A straight shanked pipe, where the height of the bowl approximately equals the length of the shank. That is,

from the point where the shank meets the bowl, the distance to the top of the bowl equals the distance to the point where the shank meets the stem. (x and y in our diagram)

2) The centerline of the bowl, top to bottom, tilts forward at a 3 to 5 degree angle, with the top of the bowl at a right angle to the centerline. The top of the bowl is not perpendicular to the shank—remember that 3 to 5 degree forward cant.

3) The bowl is slightly wider in the center than it is at either the top or the bottom.

4) The stem on a classic billiard tapers evenly from the end of the shank to the lip button, and is slightly longer than the shank itself (usually one-half inch to three-fourths of an inch on a normal-sized pipe).

Those are the minimum requirements. We will also take into account such things as proper drilling of both tobacco chamber and smoke hole, good finishing, alignments of stem and shank, good mortise and tenon fit, and everything else that makes a good pipe good. If you go to the trouble to hand-cut a stem from solid rod material, we will notice. Many of you will have to do this, as stock stem blanks of the appropriate taper are difficult to find. Anything you can do to make your entry as fine a pipe as possible in all respects—not just shape—will be taken into account.

We did not accept any pipes for our last contest that had been previously smoked. We will not insist on that rule this time. You may smoke your pipe before entering it, but remember that the better the condition of the pipe when we get it, the better impression it will make on the judges.

Once again, however, we will accept entries only from amateurs. No professionals, please. If you have ever sold a pipe, you are not eligible. We are not going to run FBI checks on you, though—this is the honor system.

To enter your pipe, mail at least one final photo of the pipe, *as well as one photo of the pipe at some stage during production.* The photos must be postmarked on or before Aug. 1, 1999, and sent to:

Pipe Contest
3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27604-1029

From these photos, we will choose the best pipes as finalists, and will subsequently ask the carvers to ship those pipes to us for final judging. If we receive 150 photos of excellent-looking pipes, we will ask that all of those pipes be shipped for final judging. The photos are simply to disqualify pipes that clearly do not fit the criteria. With a contest such as this, where the rendering of a specific shape is the goal, hands-on judging will be necessary, in most cases.

If you wish to receive confirmation of the receipt of photos and pipes, please include a self-addressed postcard, and we'll send it back. Please keep in mind that when we return your pipe, we can insure it only up to $100. If you don't trust UPS, don't enter. We cannot be responsible for pipes lost in shipping. Furthermore, we will not be able to answer inquiries about why a particular pipe did not make the final cut.

There will be a $300 first prize, with second and third place trophies awarded, and the winning pipes will be featured in our Winter issue. Wouldn't it be nice to see your name and your pipe in a full-page photograph in *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine? But even better, we guarantee that if you tackle this project, you will learn a lot about pipes. Happy carving! ***P&T***

Resources for pipemaking supplies

PIMO Inc.
P.O. Box 2043
Butternut Lane
Manchester Center, VT 05255
802.362.3371

American Smoking Pipe Company
HC-88 Box 223
30 Tall Oaks
Pocono Lake, PA 18347
http://www.AmSmoke.com/
mt@AmSmoke.com
No telephone

Mr. Paul's Pipes
P.O. Box 47145
Baltimore, MD 21244-7145
Phone and Fax 410.922.4100
http://www.pipe-repairs.com/
Paul@pipe-repairs.com

Examples of billards.

A multitude of pipes

A dedication to pipes made The Smoker a success before and during the cigar boom, and has placed it at the forefront of the emerging popularity of pipes

by Chuck Stanion

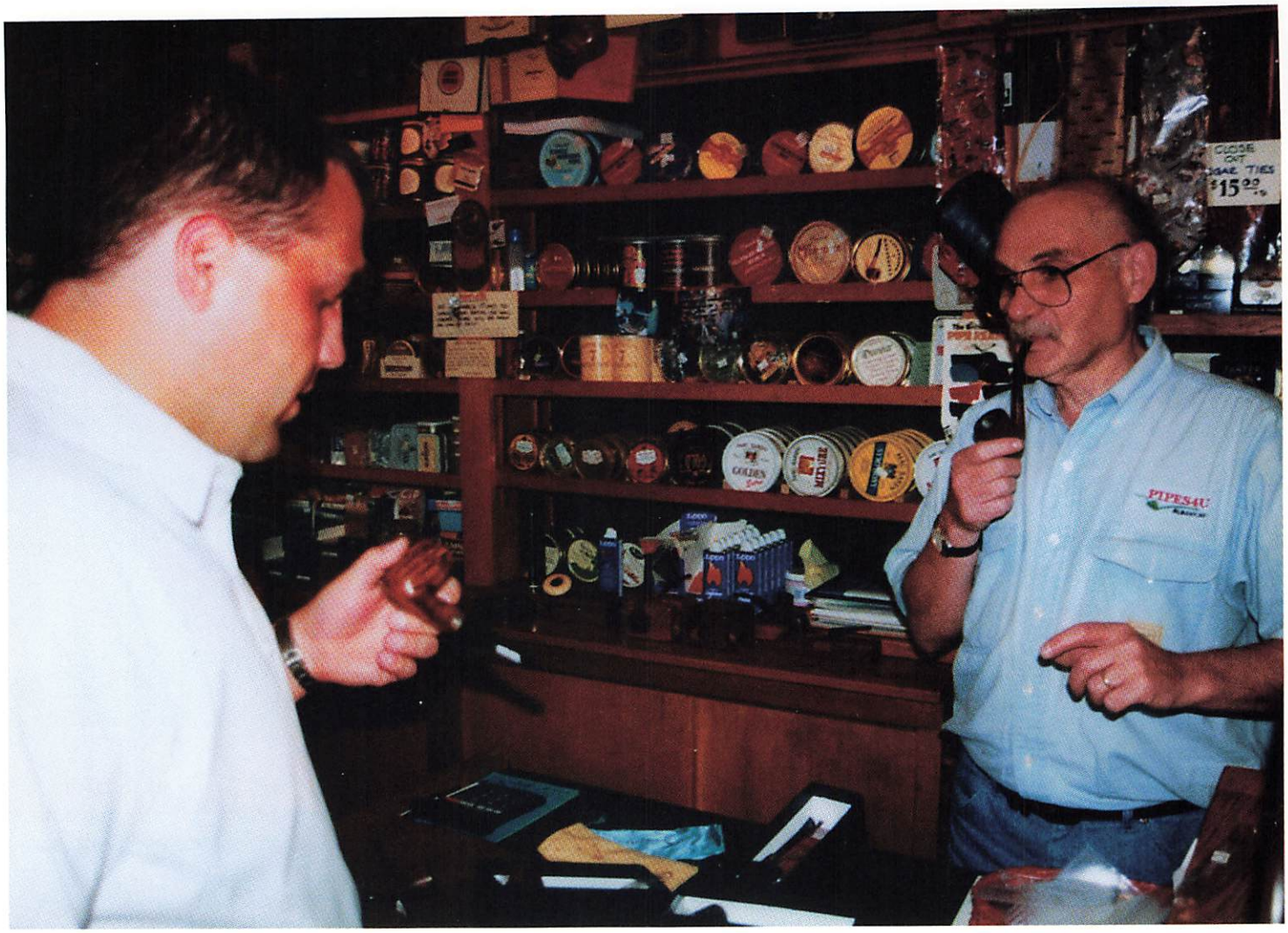
With a pipe-per-cubic-inch factor rivaling the relative molecular density of neutron stars, The Smoker of Albany, New York, is simply a great place for obsessive/compulsive pipe maniacs and casual smokers alike. Every single space, no matter how tiny, is utilized to minute tolerances. This shop may be small in overall size, but as far as fun goes, it is a Disneyland for pipe smokers. Hand-blended and tinned tobacco, and thousands and thousands of pipes fill the shop. There are also lighters, tobacco jars, pouches, carrying cases, tampers, antique pipe furniture, new pipe furniture, but the pipes—both new and estate—are the stars of the shop. Cigars are there, too, but we're talking pipes here. And if anything, the Smoker is first and foremost a pipe shop.

Photos by Paul Bonaquisti

The distinctive sign for The Smoker is the first wooden business sign to be allowed on the streets of downtown Albany. It was erected in 1978.

And it seems designed for pipes. One entire wall, the length of the shop, is made of glass cabinets enclosing pipes on display, with shelves underneath holding more inventory than you can probably imagine. And the lighting is incandescent, because flourescent lighting can discolor pipe stems.

It is not just the physical shop that is jammed with pipe ephemera...perhaps the most pipe-intensive space in the shop is embodied in the persons of the father-and-son owners, Mel and Michael Feldman. Son Michael has 20 years tobacco retail experience, and Mel Feldman has 25 years experience as a



Proprietor Mel Feldman helps a customer choose a new pipe. His extensive knowledge of pipes, along with the fact that he himself smokes a pipe constantly, makes pipe smokers feel welcome and comfortable buying pipes in The Smoker.

shop owner, and 50 years experience smoking pipes—sometimes smoking 20 bowls a day. "It sounds impossible," says his son Michael, "but this man has a pipe in his mouth all the time." Mel Feldman nods assent. "It's true," he says, without taking his pipe from his mouth.

That's how Mel came to buy the shop. Originally, it was called Quail Variety, opened in 1931 and owned by Solomon Levine since 1955. Mel used to come into the shop quite often. "He had to," says Michael. "The man smokes a pound of tobacco a week." Mel has always been fascinated by pipes, although he didn't always respect them to the level he now does. When he was in the armed forces in Korea he used to toss his old pipes overboard, because they were so cheap at the shipboard PX that they seemed too easily replaceable to hang on to. "Now he wishes he had those pipes," says Michael. "They'd really be worth something today."

Mel was working for the state of New York in those days, but became disenchanted and decided to accept retirement when he had put in his years.

Many people learn the tobacconist trade by sitting in tobacco shops, and that's how Mel learned the basics. "Of course," he says, "you never stop learning."

Michael doesn't smoke as much as his father, but "that's because I'm always running around in here, and I put my pipe down and lose it," he says. But it doesn't mean he is any less enthusiastic about pipes. He can talk for hours on the subject. Still, smoking a pipe isn't always appropriate for someone with Michael's energy. "Cigarettes are like TV, cigars are like movies, and pipes are like good books. I don't have time for pipes or books in the store."

The two differ in other ways, too—to the point where people who don't know them might think they don't work well together. "Usually in father and son teams," says Michael, "the father is in charge. The son will have no say in the business. We don't work that way." This is more of a true partnership, based on a respect for each other's merits. Still, disagreements arise—but are remedied quickly and efficiently.

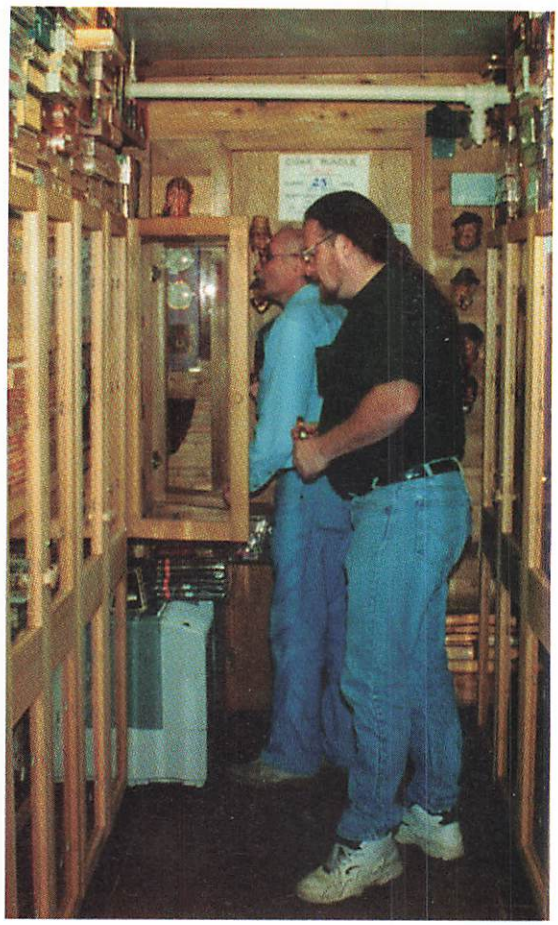
"You have to remember," says Michael, "that my father and I spend more time together than we do with our wives."

"Yes," says Mel, "especially when we travel."

"Right, when we go to a pipe show, we drive all night long, and might be together without sleep for 20 or 30 hours. And we can do that without killing each other. We know each other better than anybody."

"We're best friends," says Mel.

"Absolutely. Best friends." ▶



Hand-blended pipe tobacco is a popular element of the business at The Smoker. The cigar humidor (center) sees considerable traffic, especially when the state politicians are in town.

"It's a partnership built on friendship."

"My father and I are total opposites," says Michael. "I like to see the shop spotless, with buffed floors and sparkling hardware. My father likes tobacco on the floor as part of a well-used, comfortable atmosphere. But it drives me nuts. We really have nothing in common. Except respect. That's how we get along."

The mutual respect these two share extends to others in the industry as well. "We don't feel competitive with other businesses," says Michael. "Everyone has their own little niche—you're only going to do so much in this business."

One of the things that makes The Smoker different from many other smoke shops is its tobaccos. The Feldmans hand-blend 17 different tinned blends and 70 bulk blends. They also carry most of the more popular blends from other companies, but their own blends sell extraordinarily well.

The Smoker also keeps records of its customer's favorite blends. If someone likes a particular blend, for example, but prefers it with a certain percentage more Perique or less Latakia, there is no need to go through a long process to get it right once it has been perfected. Even after years have gone by, a customer can come in and their favorite recipe will still be on record and reproducible. Currently The Smoker has 5,000 customer blends recorded, and is always ready to whip up a special order.

Tobacco is of ultimate importance. "Many smokers," says Mel, "are very knowledgeable about pipes. They know the history of the pipe manufacturers and every detail of production. But some of them don't know much about what they smoke in those pipes."

The Feldmans are helping to rectify that lack of tobacco savvy. At pipe shows, especially, they dedicate a substantial amount of energy to helping educate pipe smokers about the subtleties of tobacco. "I've always wanted to go to pipe shows," says Michael, "and blend tobacco there at the show. Haven't done it yet. I do more of the tobacco at shows; my father does the pipes. It's amazing—there are guys who have been smoking 30 or 40 years, and they don't know what they are smoking."

Unlike proprietors of many other shops, Feldman has seen little fluctuation in the pipe business. Trade has remained steady. Perhaps it is his dedication to pipes and fine tobaccos. "I got into estate pipes, and have found them a good part of the business," he says. "I've actively participated in pipe shows since 1976, and worked hard to keep focused on pipes."

There is no doubt about that. Mel and Michael Feldman are well-known and well respected in the pipe show circuit. At last year's Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers (CORPS) show, Mel won the Barry Levin award for his years of service to and efforts on the behalf of the hobby of pipe smoking.

Feldman has been attending pipe shows for years, and his huge selection of pipes has become a mainstay at many of the shows. He typically brings 4,000 pipes or more to a show. Even

with six to eight tables, they don't all fit, and must be stored behind and under the tables. But if a collector is looking for a particular pipe, and Feldman has it, he can put his hands right on it. He *knows* his inventory.

The Smoker wasn't always so pipe-driven, though. "It was primarily a bonded Cuban cigar store," says Feldman. "When I bought the store in the '70s, it still had 75 boxes of pre-Castro cigars in stock." The humidor has since been remodeled three times, but "the era of the cigar boom," says Feldman, "is gone in the Upstate New York area."

Michael holds up a cigar to demonstrate. "See this?" he asks. "Two years ago we sold this cigar for $150 a box. Today we sell it for a lot less."

"It's not that cigars don't sell here," says Mel. "They do. The capital building is right here, and when they're in session, this shop is full of politicians and staffers and lobbyists. They're all cigar smokers." In fact, The Smoker does about half of its business in cigars.

"But as I read the business," says Mel, "two years from now it will be more like 70/30, favoring pipes and tobacco." That is not taking into account The Smoker's Internet or pipe show revenues, which are strictly pipes and pipe tobacco.

"That's really a separate business entity altogether," says Mel. "That's a business called 'Pipes 4 U.'"

Not every pipe is available, either new or estate. But given the connections in the pipe world that the Feldmans have built over the years, they are often able to find whatever a customer is looking for. The business of pipes and pipe tobacco is clearly what makes The Smoker run, whether over the Internet or within the confines of the small but impressive downtown Albany shop. And that's where the future lies for it as well.

"There is no doubt," says Mel Feldman. "Pipes are on the upswing. Just watch the industry grow." ***P&T***

The Smoker is located at 136 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12210, telephone 518.462.1302, or see the Pipes 4 U Web page at *www.thesmoker.com.*

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I would like some information on Preben Holm pipes from Denmark. Did Preben Holm have a rating system for his pipes?

Les J. Cordonneir
Columbia, Maryland

There was a rating system of sorts, with the Preben Holm "Private Collection" series as the highest grades, starting from sandblasts, then A-101; B-202; C-404; and the D-808, which, at the time of Holm's death in 1989, sold for more than $1,000. Cano Ozgener of C.A.O. International, who was importing Preben Holm pipes at that time, was kind enough to provide the chart below. The different pipes are listed in approximate order, from lowest to highest, of retail value within categories. Since Preben Holms are no longer made, it is difficult to place a current value on them.

On a visit to C.A.O. last year I discovered an interesting thing: Cano Ozgener has several hundred unsmoked Preben Holms, still in their boxes, stored in his office. After Preben Holm died, Ozgener put them away. Among the pipes on display in Ozgener's office is Holm's own favorite; the pipe he claimed was the finest single example of his work. Here's a photo:

Preben Holm Styles

Handmade Denmark	Dark brown, sandblast Traditional or Fancy
Sandblast	Good quality, dark brown varied smooth panels Traditional or Fancy
Chestnut	Smooth, walnut finish Fancy
Delight	Very good quality, light finish, sandblast panel, vulcanite or Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Heirloom	Good quality, smooth with carvings, vulcanite or Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Gr. 100	Smooth three-tone brown polished finish, vulcanite or Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Ruby	Smooth, good quality, ruby with black grain finish, Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Celebration	Smooth, mixed light and brown finish, vulcanite or Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Two Tone	Smooth, good grains, no fills, dark bottom toning to light top, Lucite stem, Fancy
Gr. 200	Good grain, no fills, orange with black grain finish, Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Prestige	Very good grain, no fills, light brown finish Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Gr. 300	Excellent grain, clean, light finish, Lucite stem, Traditional
Straight Grains	Clean straight grain, brown grains, Lucite stem, Traditional or Fancy
Hallmark I	Partially etched, bottom plateau, free-standing, light tan, Fancy
Hallmark II	Smooth red finish, bottom plateau, free-standing, clean, Fancy
Hallmark III	Light brown, smooth finish, bottom plateau, Fancy
Hallmark IV	Natural finish, excellent grain, bottom plateau, free-standing, Fancy

Preben Holm Caprice

Caprice Tawny	Tawny dark brown, hand-etched finish, hand-cut acrylic mouthpiece, Traditional
Caprice Tan	Light tan, hand-etched finish, hand-cut acrylic mouthpiece, Traditional

Both Tawny and Tan Caprice are made in 24 different shapes

Preben Holm Private Collection

Sandblast	Lightly sandblasted, light tan, oversized bowls, excellent grain, Fancy
A-101	Straight grain, deep red, leather pipe case, briar tamper, signature stem, Traditional or Fancy
B-202	Straight grain, light finish, leather pipe case, briar tamper, signature stem, Traditional or Fancy
C-404	Straight grain, light finish, very close grain, leather case, briar tamper, signature stem, Traditional or Fancy
D-808	Full, straight, light finish, leather pipe case, briar tamper, signature stem

THE ARISTOCRATS OF PIPEMAKING... SASIENI OF LONDON 4-DOT CLASSICS

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It is a little-known fact, but unsmoked Preben Holm pipes are still available to the consumer. I have no idea what the prices are, but any tobacconist can order a new Preben Holm from C.A.O. Enterprises, or you can get the name of your nearest retail source by calling C.A.O. at 615.352.0587. I was impressed to see so many pipes by a carver who has been gone for so many years. It makes me wonder how many other pockets of rare pipes are out there.

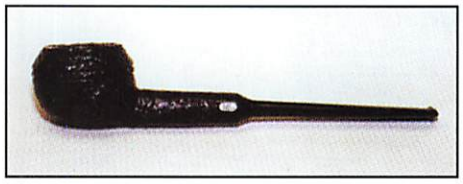
I recently purchased a book in the back of which is listed approximately a dozen publications concerning your favorite subject and mine—pipes. Is there a particular store that you know that carries an extensive collection of pipe reading material?

Steve Tobak
New Rochelle, New York

The most extensive source for pipe-related material is Antiquarian Tobacciana, owned and operated by Ben Rapaport. It is not a shop you can visit, but you can obtain a list of available titles by sending $1 to: Antiquarian Tobacciana, 11505 Turnbridge Lane, Reston, VA 20194-1220.

Enclosed is a photo of a Weber pipe. It smokes very well. Can you tell me the approximate age of this pipe? It's marked Weber Weskit no. 755.

Steve Notte
Glendale, Pennsylvania



All I've been able to find is that Weber pipes were produced from the mid 1940s (possibly 1943) to the mid-to-late '70s. Pipe collector Mike McCain was able to add that Weber pipes were made in the Jobey factory in New Jersey. Carl Weber once owned Jobey, so that makes sense. "If you look at the logo," says McCain, "you can see that it's exactly the same as the Jobey logo, except for the lettering."

That doesn't narrow it much, except that your pipe is at least 20 years old. If any of our readers can offer more specifics, I'd appreciate hearing from them.

I acquired a sandblasted pipe in a bargain basket about 1972, that is marked "Royal Sovereign" in type script. Stamped to the right in simple print is "Made in London England." This is a good smoking pipe. I think that it might be one of those made by a London pipemaker like Dunhill, Charatan, etc. and sold under a different name because the briar fails to meet standard. Could this be the case?

Gary Stahl
Whitehall, Michigan

Dunhill's seconds are Parker and Hardcastle, and Charatan made Ben Wades for a while. If either of these firms made a "Royal Sovereign" I am unaware of it. Stanwell made a Royal Sovereign, but not in London, of course. However, according to Wilczak and Colwell's book, *Who Made that Pipe?*, L. Orlik Ltd. made a Royal Sovereign pipe in England, and this company may be the source of your pipe.

What is the difference between a Balkan mixture and an English mixture?

Daniel Markowski
Denmark

Balkan tobacco basically refers to Oriental tobaccos grown in mountainous regions. This is not what is meant by a "Balkan blend," though. A Balkan blend has the Turkish/Oriental component as its primary leaf; it can be just Turkish and Latakia or a blend of Virginia, Balkan (Turkish) and Latakia. Perique can be used in either, although "classic" blenders never mix Perique with Latakia. Generally a "true" English blend has a base of Virginia (and no Burley, though Burley may be included in "Americanized" English blends), and uses Orientals as condiments (which is why it is called "condimental leaf"). Latakia may be very pronounced and so can Turkish/Greek leaf, but still it has a base of Virginia. The Latakia ratio can be exactly the same between them.

However, what people "mean" when they refer to Balkan blends may be different from the basic definition. It really comes down to mild vs. medium versions of the same type of blend. Generally, a blend with more Turkish and more Latakia is referred to as Balkan. ***P&T***

Please submit your pipe questions to: Ask Chuck, Pipes and tobaccos *magazine, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029, or e-mail your questions to chuck@pt-magazine.com. Feel free to send answers too; I'm always looking for those.*

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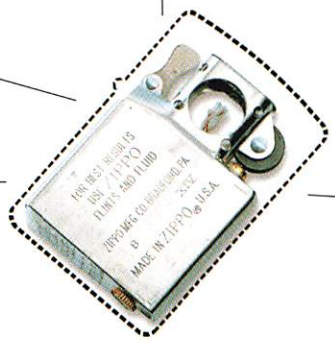

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The Pipes AND TOBACCOS Museum

Welcome to the *Pipes and tobaccos* Museum, where, each issue, you will see one of the pipes from our collection. It is a real collection, by the way, on display in our offices in Raleigh, North Carolina, and you may visit us and see it anytime after June 15, when we expect to have the final details complete. You may wish to call first, so that editors Dayton Matlick or Chuck Stanion can arrange to give you a personal tour.

It is quite a collection, with examples of the finest work from most of the pipemakers that have appeared in the pages of our magazine. Eventually we will have examples from everyone—some are still being made.

We also have some astonishing pipes from makers yet to appear in *P&T*. But the pipes you will see highlighted in these pages, such as the Wiley pipe at right, will be representatives from featured carvers. You'll have to visit our offices to see the others.

This pipe, donated by Randy Wiley last year, is an example of his highest grade, an Ovation W5. The Ovation line has five levels, from W1 to W5, with retail prices beginning at $600 for the W1 and increasing $100 per level up to the $1,000 W5. The Ovations are characterized by their glass-like, perfect finish. Wiley spends as much time sanding and polishing these pipes as he does with the original carving. "Finishing," says Wiley, "is the most time-consuming step in making these pipes. But they have to be perfect."

Very few pipes make the Ovation grade. "It simply depends on the wood," says Wiley. "Sometimes I get two or three fabulous blocks of briar in a bag. But that is rare. More often, I get none." With a total production of only 1,500 to 2,000 Wiley pipes a year, perfect pipes suitable for the Ovation grade are extraordinary occurrences.

We are proud to have such a pipe in our collection, and hope you will have an opportunity to see it in person. But if you can't make it to Raleigh, just keep reading *P&T*, and in each issue you will see another selection. *P&T*

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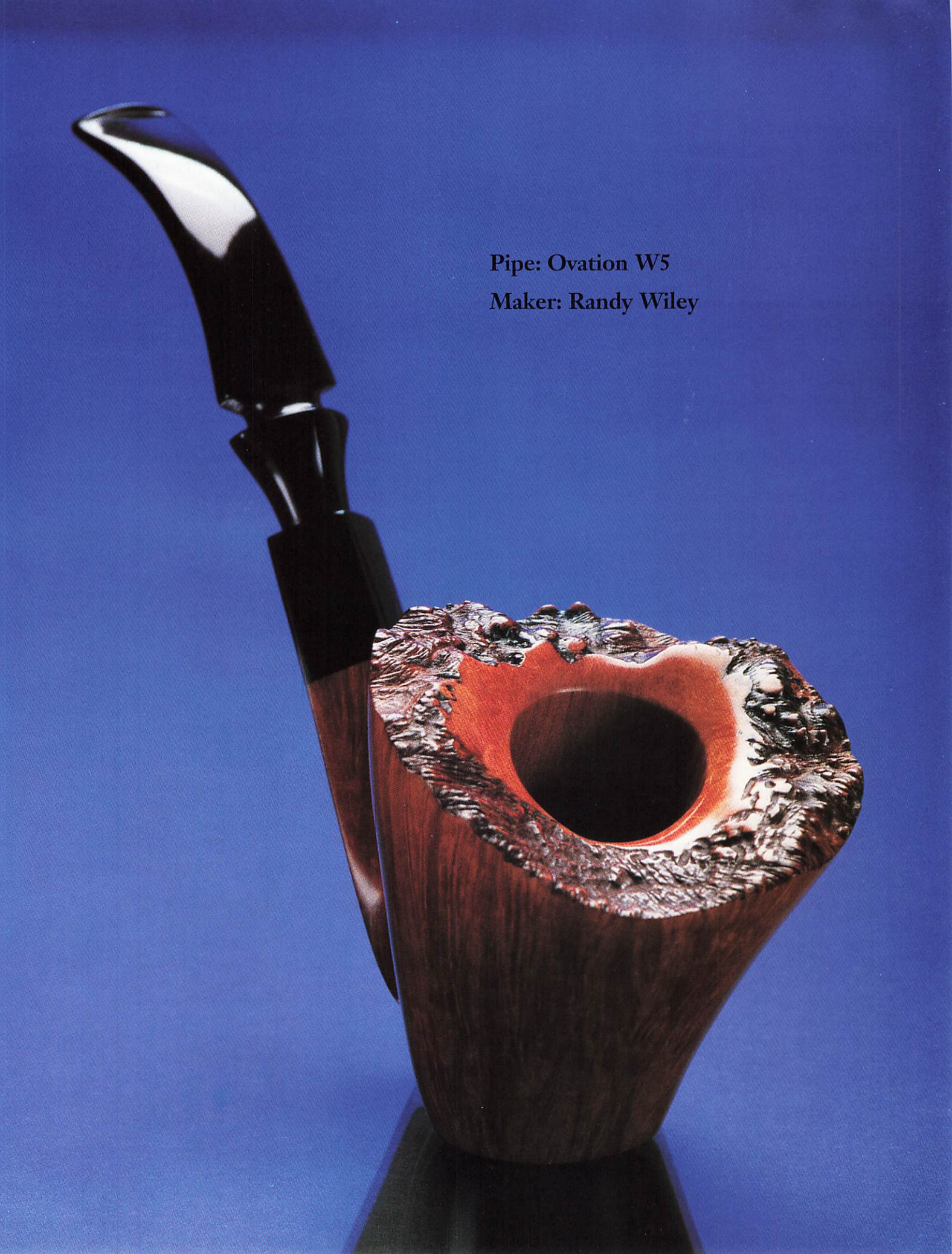


Pipe: Ovation W5
Maker: Randy Wiley

Arrowhead Pipe Club
This club sponsors such events as the Michigan Regional Pipe Smoking Contest, which took place May 3, 1998, in Durand, Michigan. For further information, contact Dan Spaniola, Arrowhead Pipe Club, c/o Paul's Pipe Shop, 647 South Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502.

Broad River Smoker's Conclave
Stationed in Shelby, North Carolina, the Broad River Smoker's Conclave meets on the second Thursday of each month at Tobacco Road Smoke Shop in Shelby. For information, contact Chris Tallent at 704.476.0063 or fax 704.480.6748.

The Calumet Pipe Club of North Alabama
The Calumet Pipe Club meets the first Thursday of each month, currently at Finnegan's Pub near Memorial and Drake in Huntsville, Alabama. The philosophy of the club is to promote good fellowship and education through guest lectures, videotapes and shared experience. For further information, check out the club's very informative Web page at *www.hsv.tis.net/~sceptic/pipepipe.htm*, call 256.880.0189 or 256.539.6431, or e-mail *sceptic@traveller.com*.

Capital Area Pipe Smokers (CAPS)
Based in Fairfax, Virginia, this is a long-established club with a solid membership of approximately 40 dedicated pipe smokers. The club hosts field trips to tobacco-related sites and frequently hosts guest speakers at its meetings. For meeting times and other information, contact George Riddle at 703.385.3033.

Central Oklahoma Pipe Enthusiasts
COPE meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Royal Bavaria Brauhaus & Restaurant, 3401 S. Sooner Road, Moore, Oklahoma. Times may change. For further information, contact COPE, P.O. Box 7034, Moore, OK 73153; or e-mail *jhaldeman@bix.com*.

Chesapeake Pipe Club
Informal meetings one Monday per month at 7:30 p.m. at Rothwells Grille, 106 West Padonia Road (Corner of York and Padonia), Timonium, Maryland. For further information call Bill Maitz, 410.825.8940.

Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club International Pipe & Cigar Show
With 165 tables already sold out, this show promises to be a huge success. It will be held April 24 and 25, 1999, at the Ramada Inn Hotel, 17040 S. Halsted Street in Harvey, Illinois. (Telephone 708.596.1500.) Activities begin on Friday, April 23 and run through Sunday evening, and will include the Exhibitor's Sweetheart's Private Lunch on Saturday, as well as a silent auction, a cigar dinner and a variety of guest speakers. For additional information, contact Bill Amato, 2947 Edison Street, Blue Island, IL 60406 (telephone 708.388.5118) or Mike Reschke, 540 S. Westmore, Lombard, IL 60148 (telephone 630.889.0453).

Christopher Morley Pipe Club of Philadelphia
Meets the third Wednesday of every month at Chris' Jazz Cafe, 1421 Sansom Street, at 7 p.m. For further information, call Bob Page at 215.567.2972.

Confrere of Indiana Briar Friars
For specific information on meeting times and places, contact Stephen Williams at 765.282.0229.

The Corona Club
Approximately every six to seven weeks, this pipe and cigar club meets in central New Jersey for an upscale dinner and an evening of smoking enjoyment. Membership dues are $75 per year, and dinners are paid for separately. Contact Burt Zitomer at 973.301.0001.

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
This club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at the Londoner Tavern, 4291 Belt Line Road, Addison, Texas. E-mail Ed Price at *epr065@airmail.net*.

Fresno Pipe Club
The Fresno Pipe Club meets on the third Sunday of each month at 6 p.m. at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Fresno, California. Meetings are informal and include tobacco samplings, discussion and guest speakers from various pipe and tobacco companies. For more information, contact Douglas A. Pitts at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Manchester Center, 3402 N. Blackstone, Suite 124, Fresno, CA 93726; telephone 209.228.1389; or e-mail *dpitts@gte.net*.

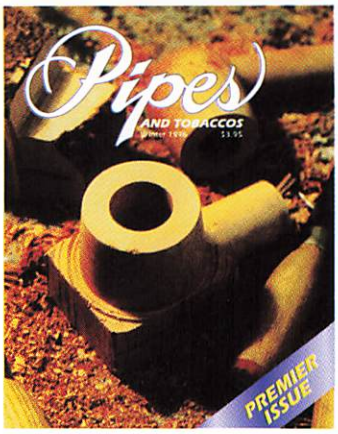
Goodfellows Pipe Club
Goodfellows Pipe Club invites you to attend its meetings, held the second Thursday of each month from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Cigar Emporium, Pearl Kai Shopping Center, 98-199 Kamehameha Highway, Suite A-9, Aiea, HI 96701. For further information, contact Dale James Neff at 808.484.5757, or fax 808.484.5755.

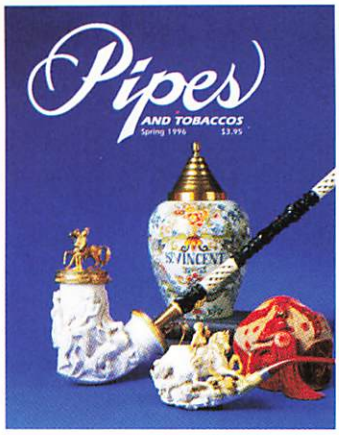
Greater Kansas City Pipe Club
Having successfully held its first pipe show last November, the Greater Kansas City Pipe Club continues to grow. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at Cigar & Tobak, 103 Metcalf Center in Overland Park, Kansas, at 8 p.m. For more information, call Mark Wilson at 816.525.1137 or e-mail Dale Adkins at *dadkins@kc-primary.net*.

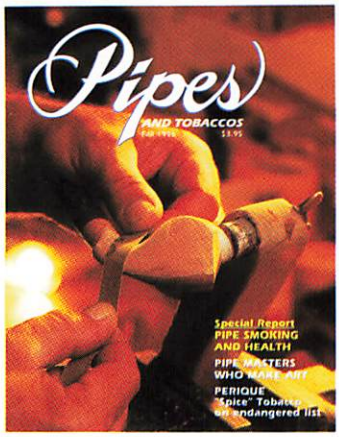
Hudson Valley (N.Y.) Pipe Club
Formed in 1997, the Hudson Valley Pipe Club meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. Because the meetings take place at a number of different restaurants in the Mid-Hudson Valley, contact one of the following people for location and further information: Al DiFalco, 914.756.2574; Rob Denholtz, 914.462.0751 or *den@ulster.net*; Steve Abrams, 914.679.8430 or *snabra@aol.com*.

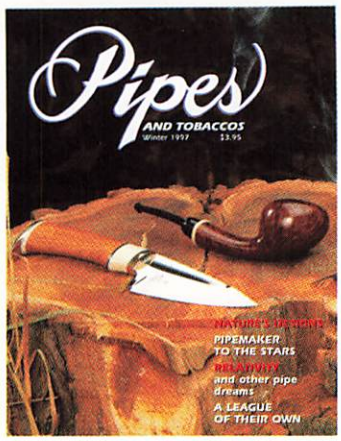
Nashville Pipe Show
The Second Annual Nashville Pipe Show will be held on Saturday, Aug. 7, 1999, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at The Inn at Opryland, across from the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. There will be a Pre-Show Show and Social on Friday, Aug. 6 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Call The Inn at Opryland at 615.889.0800 to reserve a room, and mention the pipe show for a special rate. For additional information on the show, call 888.292.9576.

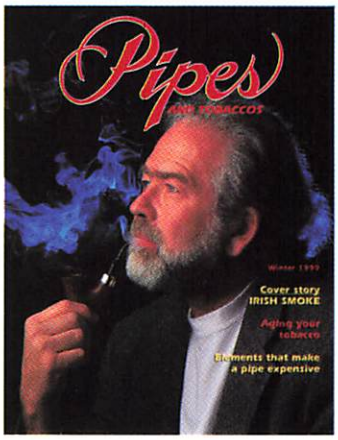
New York Pipe Club 7th Annual Pipe Convention
The welcome reception for the N.Y. show











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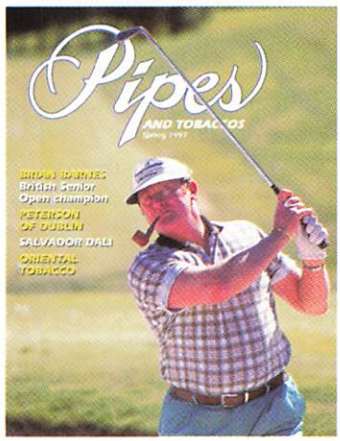

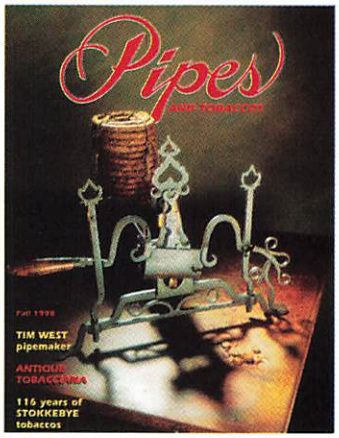

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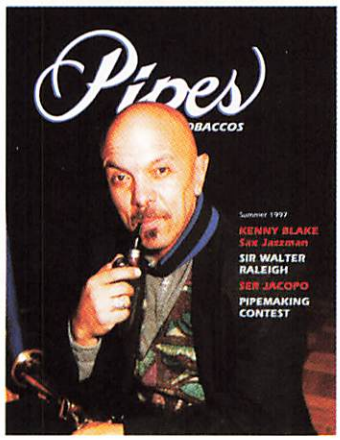

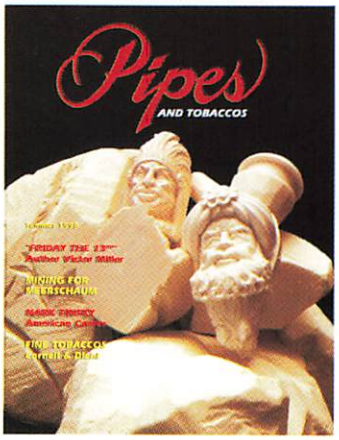

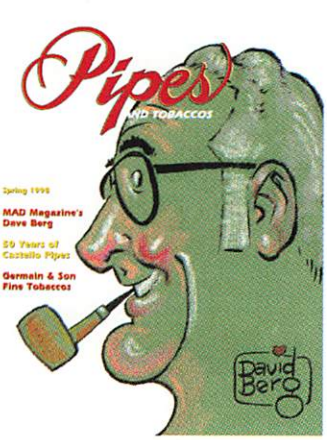

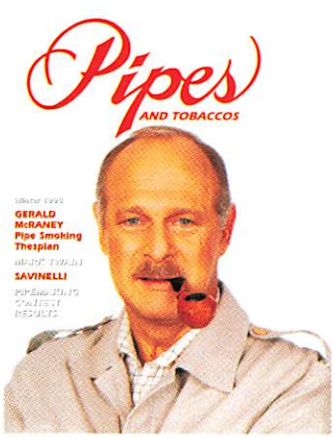

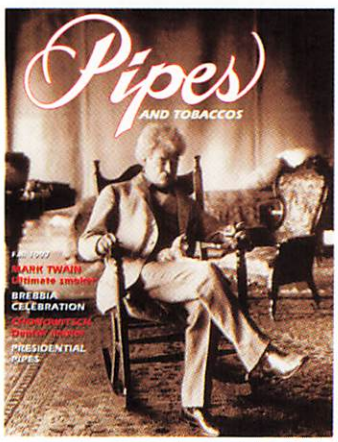

is scheduled for March 5, 1999, with the pipe show to take place on Saturday, March 6 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Ramada Hotel, Newark International Airport. Call the hotel at 800.223.8285 or 973.824.4000 for reservations, and be sure to mention the pipe show for a special room rate of $79, which is available up to March 1. For additional information, contact Rich Esserman, 238 Aycrigg Ave., Unit D, Passaic, NJ 07055, or telephone 212.455.9869.

North American Society of Pipe Collectors 1999 Swap/Sell Pipe Show
With more than 540 members worldwide, NASPC will be hosting its 1999 pipe show from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, 1999, at the Holiday Inn on the Lane, 328 West Lane Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201; telephone 614.294.4848. This show is free to the public, and will feature 92 tables, a fund-raising raffle, dozens of great prizes and a free hospitality suite on Friday night. Hotel room rates are $73 a night. Mention the NASPC pipe show for this special rate. For show information and table reservations visit the NASPC Web site at *http://www.naspc.org*, or contact Bill Unger, P.O. Box 9642, Columbus, OH 43209-9642; telephone 614.252.2904; or e-mail *bunger@jadeinc.com*. And don't forget to join the NASPC while you are at it. Only $12 per year, and you receive a subscription to one of the largest, most informative pipe newsletters available.

North Oakland Tobacco and Pipe Club
This new pipe club in the metro Detroit area meets the second Thursday of each month from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. There are annual dues (which include membership to the North American Society of Pipe Collectors (NASPC) but anyone can attend a meeting or two before committing. People are encouraged to bring pipes to trade, tobacco to share and good conversation. Club goals include bringing in guest speakers, organizing road trips, putting on pub and restaurant "smokers," and ultimately hosting a pipe convention of our own. Meetings are currently held at Churchill's Tobacconist in Rochester, 1416B Walton Blvd., one block west of Livernois, in the Merchant of Vino Plaza. However, meeting locations can change, so anyone interested in attending or needing further information should contact Michael Lindner at 248.844.8209 or at *sasieni@pobox.com*.

Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers
The Pipe Puffers meet on the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. at the Tobacco Plus Store in the Highland Square Shopping Center in Hardy, Arkansas. Membership is open and visitors are always welcome. The club's second annual Pipe Smoking Contest is scheduled for the second Saturday in June 1999, at 10 a.m. at Tobacco Plus in Hardy. For more information, contact Dick Alexander, Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers, 32 Alma Lane, Hardy, AR 72542-9487, call 870.856.4100 or 870.856.4433, or e-mail *dalexander@centuryinter.net*.

Old Pueblo Pipe Club
This recently formed club meets at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at different restaurants in the Tucson, Arizona, area. A permanent meeting place is soon to be decided upon. For further information, contact Dave Tetrault at 520. 797.8874 or *3sons@azstarnet.com*.

Peninsula Pipe Club
Founded in 1996, this club serves the South San Francisco Bay area and meets on the first Sunday of each month from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Tobacco Club, 1683 Laurel Street, San Carlos, California. For directions, contact the Tobacco Club at 650.596.8856 or e-mail *ppc@marketfire.com*.

Royal Canadian Mavens of Pipes
With more than 100 members from the U.S., Italy, Japan, England, Denmark and, of course, Canada, this club holds monthly meetings at rotating locations in the Greater Vancouver area. It also produces a quarterly newsletter, *Latakia Clouds*. For further information, write to 406 Bruneau Place, Aldergrove, British Columbia, Canada V4W 3K9.

St. Louis Pipe Club
The club discusses topics of interest to pipe smokers and collectors. Meetings are informal and include discussions on pipe-related books and literature, and the sampling of tobacco blends. Meetings are the second Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at John Dengler Tobacconist, 700 S. Main, St. Charles, Missouri; and the fourth Saturday of each month at 8 p.m. at the Train Depot, 14070 New Halls Ferry, Florissant, Missouri. For further information, contact Jay Milton at 314.837.5902 (days) or 618.656.7584 (evenings), or Bob Calloway at 314.946.8555.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club
Meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. For further information contact Steve Smith, *fourdots@ma.ultranet.com*, or Don Powers at 781.449.0380.

South Florida Briar Brotherhood
Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. at London Pub Too on US 441 and SR7. *Smoke Signals*, the club's newsletter, features interesting articles, tobacco reviews and a healthy dose of humor. You can subscribe by contacting Grant Porter at Smoke Signals, P.O. Box 450967, Sunrise, FL 33345-0967, or find the club's Web page at *http://se.mediaone.net/~pipesman*.

Triangle Area Pipe Smokers (TAPS) 1999 Pipe and Cigar Expo
The next TAPS show, featuring 65 tables of exhibitors, will be on Saturday, March 27, 1999, at the Holiday Inn in downtown Raleigh, North Carolina. The club meets the second Thursday of every month at the Holiday Inn-Crabtree at 6:30 p.m. for sandwiches, smoke and general frivolity. Further information may be obtained by calling Chuck Stanion at 919.872.5040.

The Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers (TUCOPS)
The Pipe Smoker's Ephemeris is a must-have subscription for the serious pipe enthusiast. You may obtain a subscription form by writing to Tom Dunn, 20-37 120th Street, College Point, NY 11356.

Wisconsin Briar Friars
Pipe and cigar smokers club. Contact Mark Herman, 1613 N. Peach, Marshfield, WI 54449. *P&T*

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